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Surrendered
1910

46.

1549.

THE TWO HOUSES (See page 157).

CHOICE GATHERINGS

FOR

CHRISTIAN CHILDREN,

WITH

AN INTRODUCTION

BY THE

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LONDON:
J. H. JACKSON, ISLINGTON GREEN,
SEELEY, BURNSIDE, AND SEELEY, FLEET STREET.

1846.

1549.

LONDON:
GEORGE BARCLAY, CASTLE STREET, LEICESTER SQUARE.

INTRODUCTION.

THE increased attention which has of late years been paid, both by clergy and laity, to the moral and religious education of the young, must be regarded by every reflecting and pious mind as a ground of heartfelt rejoicing, and hopeful anticipation.

In this view it is satisfactory to observe that the unmeaning, and in many cases the positively mischievous, publications of the last century, have been, to a very great extent, superseded by a class of books, the object of which is, not only to please, but also to instruct and edify. Of such productions those appear to possess the highest interest and to give promise of the greatest usefulness which are of a purely religious character, and are presented to the reader in the attractive form of dialogue, figure, or incident. And this is no more than what might have been expected, inasmuch as this symbolical mode of teaching produces, especially in the case of young persons, a stronger impression upon the mind

than the naked statement of abstract truth. It has been well observed, that if *arguments* are the *pillars* which support the fabric, *similitudes* are the *windows* that admit the light. Parables or fables have therefore been much used by wise men in all ages as the most ready and apprehensible vehicles of conveying salutary lessons to mankind; for when viciousness of conduct or error in judgment is the subject of censure, apt illustration often forms, not only the most summary, but also the most forcible method of producing conviction, and such an inferential mode of address seldom fails to administer a more searching and pointed reproof than a less circuitous and more direct appeal. "By this management," observes the Rev. T. Scott, "the subject is stripped of such circumstances as do not properly belong to it; the trouble of a long chain of argument is spared, and the cause is brought to a compendious decision: reason and conscience are induced to pass sentence before self-love is consulted, and a man is for a moment, as it were, *imposed on, in order to his being profitably undeceived;* he is made judge in his own cause before he is aware, and decides against himself without ever intending it. The truth of a parable lies in the instruction contained in it, and the feigned circumstances, being known to be such, are in no way inconsistent with veracity, but *greatly subserve* the cause of truth, imparting

it in an unsuspected and agreeable manner to the mind."

As illustrative of these remarks we may cite the most ancient fable or parable on record,—that set forth in the ninth chapter of the Book of Judges, where Jotham represents the folly of the Shechemites in making the basest of the sons of Gideon their king, speaking of the various members of Gideon's family under the emblems of an olive-tree, a fig-tree, and a vine, and describing the arrogant usurper, Abimelech, as a bramble, which, being set on fire, might communicate the flame to the loftiest cedars, and consume them with itself in one vast and terrible conflagration. We may also instance Nathan's well-known parable (2 Sam. xii.), upon hearing which David, without noticing its reference to himself, pronounced with just indignation the condemnation of his own offence, and was then startled by the prophet's sudden application of the narrative, in the words, "Thou art the man." In like manner Joab, when he found that "the heart of king David was towards Absalom," (who, in consequence of the murder of his brother Amnon, was still living in banishment at Geshur), framed a plausible and pathetic story, which he put into the mouth of a woman of Tekoah, who, feigning herself to be a disconsolate widow, went and related it to David, by which representation

David was induced to recall Absalom, and "Absalom returned to his own house."

The teaching too of Him, who spake as never man spake, was eminently of a figurative character: "He spake unto them in parables." The book of nature was made the interpreter of the mysteries of grace. The animate and inanimate objects around him were chosen to illustrate the momentous truths which bore upon the best interests of his hearers. Would he, for example, describe Himself as the author of eternal salvation? "I," says He, "am the *door*." Would He declare that He is the sole support of our spiritual existence? "I am the living *bread*;" "I am the *water* of life." Does He set forth the intimate and endearing connexion that subsists betwixt Himself and his believing people? "I," says He, "am the *vine*, and ye are the branches." Does he foretell the effects which would every where be produced by the preaching of the Gospel? He compares the preacher to a sower, and the word to the *seed* sown. Does He shew that there will necessarily be always a mixture of the wicked and the righteous in the visible church? He compares "the kingdom of heaven," first to a *field* where tares and wheat are both growing together until the harvest, and then to a *net* which gathered of fish both good and bad. What, again, could more strikingly evince

the duty of "forgiving one another as Christ hath also forgiven us," than the parable representing a kind master forgiving a *servant* who owed him ten thousand talents, (which, by the lowest computation, amounts to nearly two millions sterling), and then exhibiting that same servant going and seizing his fellow-servant by the throat, and casting him and his family into prison, merely because he owed him the insignificant sum of one hundred pence (a little more than three pounds)?

Indeed, so constantly did Christ avail himself of this method of imparting instruction in His addresses, "both to the wise and to the unwise," that St. Mark informs us "without a parable spake He not unto them." "He needed not that any should testify of man, for He knew what was in man;" and therefore He was fully aware of what was calculated to interest the understanding and dwell upon the memory. Others have adopted the same principle, and with similar success. Hence George Herbert recommends to the country parson "the study of physic and of herbs, even as our Saviour made plants and seeds to teach the people." Again he writes, "They say that it is an ill mason that refuseth any stone, and there is no knowledge but in a skilful hand serves either positively as it is, or else to illustrate some other knowledge." Again, "Sometimes the parson telleth them *stories* and sayings of others, for

these also men heed and remember better than exhortations, which though earnest, yet often die with the sermon, especially with country people, who are thick and heavy, and hard to raise to a point of zeal and fervency, and need a mountain of fire to kindle them; but stories and sayings they well remember." The "Pilgrim's Progress," and other interesting allegories of Bunyan, have not only been read and valued by poets and divines, but have also been translated into various languages for the benefit of foreign nations, among whom they have been extensively circulated. So Legh Richmond's "Young Cottager," and "Dairyman's Daughter," "Janeway's Tokens," and similar publications, have, on account of their interesting character, been highly appreciated, and have, no doubt, under God's blessing, been instrumental in the conversion and edification of many souls.

It is with a view of furthering such a blessed end that the following pages have been published; and it is hoped that, through the Divine aid, this little unpretending volume may prove the means of drawing the attention of some young persons to those all-important truths, the due reception of which will lead to their present and eternal welfare.

The selection has been made for the purpose of exhibiting the leading doctrines of the Gospel in the most easy and engaging *manner.* *As* a simple and clear illustration

of the nature of *faith*, we may instance the account given in page 122, &c., of a little girl, who, at her father's bidding, threw herself into his arms in a dark cellar below her. Cases are mentioned in page 26, and page 121, to shew *the duty and privilege of reading the Word of God*, while the pleasing account, in page 128, of the happy death of a little boy, is calculated to prove that none are too young to look, as he did, to the ante-type of the brazen serpent, to be healed of the wounds of sin. The stories in pages 12 and 26, exemplify the fact, that wherever any are taught to feel the preciousness of the Saviour themselves, they instantly become anxious, like the woman of Samaria, to make known that preciousness unto others. When such examples are furnished, (as in the cases referred to), in those of the most tender age, who is not ready to exclaim, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast Thou perfected praise?"

All who have been engaged in the truly delightful task of instructing the children of Sunday-schools will readily appreciate the attempt to draw the attention of the young to the Saviour by such simple illustrations; and they may, it is trusted, find some hints in the following pages to assist them in their important work.

The reference to "the Great Deliverer," in page 117, *reminds* us of a touching allegory

which appeared in a recent number of the "Church Missionary Juvenile Instructor,"—an allegory not only interesting in itself, but forming so excellent a model to those whose business it is to address the young, that it may prove profitable to insert it here entire.

The writer who refers to it, observes:—

"I well remember being extremely gratified when in Cambridge, by the sight of above two thousand children, who were assembled in the house of God, in order that they might listen to a sermon expressly suited to the occasion. In that town it was customary for the Sunday-school children of each school connected with the Church of England to meet once a-year for this purpose. I shall not easily forget the thrilling effect of so many young voices all joining in singing the praises of God, or the solemn character of the service. You may readily imagine that it would be no easy matter for the preacher to succeed in gaining the attention of so many children, and yet I do think that he was successful in this respect. The sermon he preached was of such an interesting character, that it could not fail to arrest the attention of the most careless. I will endeavour to give you an outline of it. After reading his text, the preacher commenced thus:—

"There was once a great prince, who lived *in a magnificent* palace,—a splendid place

indeed it was. This prince was attended by numbers of messengers, who were all of them ready to do his bidding, and to go wherever he sent them. In his palace he had a window, from which he could see all over his dominions, and could watch all the actions of all his subjects. If this kind prince ever saw any of his servants in danger, it was his custom immediately to despatch some of his messengers to their assistance, and to warn them of their danger. Thus, on one occasion, he observed a poor woman and her little boy perishing with thirst in the wilderness, when immediately a messenger was sent to shew her a well of water, and thus they were delivered from a painful death. On another occasion he observed that the city in which one of his servants lived was likely to be destroyed by fire; and accordingly he lost no time in sending two of his attendants to warn this man of his danger, and to bring him and his family out of the city to a place of safety. No sooner had they made their escape than the city was in flames.

"But this kind prince was most remarkable for his love to children; and once, when looking from his window, he observed a party of dear children at play, evidently enjoying themselves very much, without a single fear, or the slightest suspicion of danger being nigh. Their kind friend the prince, however, perceived at *no* great distance from them a

savage ruffian, making toward them with a sword in his hand, for the purpose of murdering them. What was to be done? The danger of the children was very great, and unless some way of escape was instantly provided, they must inevitably perish. Should a messenger be sent to rescue the children? No, the case was too urgent. The kind prince could not trust a messenger for this work. His love for them was so great, and so fearful was he lest those children should perish, that he determined to go himself. For this purpose he disguised himself, was clothed like other men, and left his palace. When he came amongst those who professed to be his subjects, he met with every insult. Some spit upon him, some buffeted him, and others mocked. But he heeded not. He was bent upon saving those dear children. He made all possible haste toward them. They were still playing, unconscious of their danger. The ruffian had almost reached them. In fact, the kind prince had only just time to throw himself between them and the murderer, when he received, in his own person, the dreadful stroke which was aimed at them. At the same moment, however, he contrived to give the murderous wretch such a blow as sent him writhing in agony to the place from whence he came. The wound proved fatal to the prince; he was now dying, the blood *was streaming* from his side, and still his love

for the children was as great as ever. With his dying breath he called them to him, and, as they stood around him, he said, 'My dear children, you must haste from this place, and lose no time in setting out for my palace. If you remain here that horrid monster from whose hands I have just rescued you will soon return and destroy you. Haste to my palace; but, before you go, let me sprinkle you with my blood, and then, when you knock at the gate of my palace, and shew that you are sprinkled with my blood, my Father will admit you for my sake, and you will be safe for ever.'"

The observation made by a little boy to his teacher after the sermon was very natural, and exhibits, in a striking manner, the value of such a mode of instruction as that which has been alluded to. "Well, sir," said he, "that was the most beautiful sermon I ever heard in all my life. He did it by earthly things, but he meant heavenly. I knew what he was coming to all the time."

May that adorable Redeemer, who has commanded those that love Him to feed His lambs, pour out His Spirit abundantly upon those young persons into whose hands His providence may place this little publication, and may He graciously condescend to use it as an *instrument*, however feeble, of leading

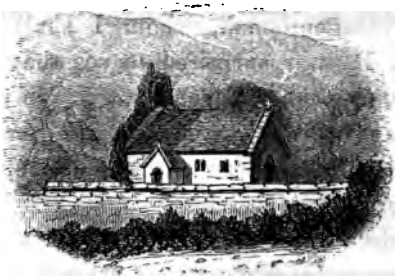
them to love their Bible, and to seek pardon and salvation through Him, of Whom that Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, so largely testifies, and Whose merciful invitations all breathe the spirit of the words,—"I love them that love Me, and they that seek Me early shall find me."

C. C.

Islington, March 1846.

For many, if not most, of the following Gatherings, the Publisher is indebted to an estimable clergyman who is actively employed amongst the young in one of our colonies.

They appeared so interesting in the ephemeral form in which they were originally sent forth, that their collection and publication in a little volume were deemed likely to prove an acceptable and instructive offering to our youth at home.



THE MISSIONARY BOX, OR AN ORANGE.

At a missionary meeting, held several years ago in a certain town in Canada, the attention of a clergyman, who was engaged in addressing it, was drawn to a poor man standing against the wall, holding in his arms a little girl of about five years old. It was not the man, so much as the child, which caught the speaker's notice. The little thing kept her eyes steadily fixed on him; and while he was relating facts which shewed the sad state of the heathen, she seemed to listen with wonder.

This gentleman, whom I shall call Mr. B., was surprised to see that this little face shewed deeper interest in what he was saying than any face in the room. And it is not strange that he should be surprised at this; for we often see little children so careless and giddy, or giving so much trouble, that we are sorry they are brought to such places. But though Mr. B. often looked across the room at this little face, he always saw it the same; the child was always listening with deep attention to every word he spoke.

Well, some time had passed after this meeting, when one day a message came to this clergyman, who lived in the town where it was held, to ask him to visit a sick child. He went, as he was told, to a poor cottage, and was taken into a small room, where, lying on a bed, he saw the same face which he had beheld *at the* missionary meeting. He knew

the child instantly, and she smiled. He immediately took a seat beside her bed, but he did not begin to ask her if she loved to hear of missionaries, and had ever tried if she could do any thing for them. No; he saw the child was ill, and he knew that if she were to die, there were things that concerned her more than these. His first wish was to find out whether she knew that God loved her, and had given His own dear Son to die for her; that she, believing His love to her, might love Him in return, and be saved from sin and Satan, and be made His dear child for ever. Mr. B. talked with her about this, and he was much pleased to find that, young and simple, and in other things ignorant, as she was, she had gained this most precious knowledge—a knowledge which "cannot be gotten for gold," which maketh "wise the simple," and which many learned, and many great, and

many noble men, have not gained, and, for want of it, have been unhappy both in life and in death.

God is true, and "God is love." He has said, "I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me." And so He had put it into this infant heart to desire to seek Him early, and to know Him, and to love and serve Him; and then He was found by her, and led her little sinful heart to love Him, as it never would have done if He had not first loved her. This little girl had been taught by His good Spirit, and she knew that she had a sinful nature, that often tempted her to think and do what was wrong. She felt that she did not love the Lord Jesus as she ought. She knew too that she had often done the things which she ought not to have done; and therefore she daily prayed that her sins might be forgiven, and washed *away in* the blood of Jesus, "the Lamb of

God which taketh away the sin of the world."

Mr. B. soon discovered all this, and was glad for the sweet child. Then he thought he might ask about the missionary meeting, in order to know whether she had thought of it since; and he found that she loved to hear of missionaries, because she loved God, and because she wished that every human being, every man, woman, and child, all over the world, should know His love, and be as happy as she was.

"Happy!" you will say, "why, the child was poor and sick! HOW could SHE be happy?" Yes, she was happy! happier than many rich, and gay, and proud, and haughty children are; for "the peace of God" was in her heart, and heaven was before her. And if any want to know how she could be happy, let them go to Jesus Christ and learn of

Him, and they "shall find rest unto their souls."

This dear child before she was ill was happy; she was happy when she was ill. Religion did not prevent her from feeling pain, but it made her quiet and patient. She trusted in God, and He did deliver her—she prayed to Him, and He comforted her.

Mr. B. often visited her, and loved to visit her. At last the blessed Saviour, who had made her one of His lambs, took her to His heavenly fold. When she was dead and buried her father came to the clergyman, and, with tears rolling down his cheeks, drew out of his pocket a little box, and gave it to him. When Mr. B. took it, he said, "What is this?" And the father said, "Sir, in this box you will find some pence, and I will tell you how they came there." So he gave this history of them. He said,

that as he was going home with his little girl from the missionary meeting, she was talking to him all the way about what she had heard, and wondering very much at many things. She reminded him that the gentleman had said every one might do something, if it was ever so little, to help the missionaries, and that they all ought to have missionary boxes in their houses, and get as much as they could put into them; and then she begged her father to get her a box. He told her he did not know how to get one; but she was not contented with that answer, and pressed him so much, that as they were passing a toy-shop he went in and bought a little common box, and gave it to her, so that she was delighted. But her father had more than this to do, for the next day she wanted something to put into her box. He told her he was too poor, but she thought he might give her something, and begged

so hard, that he promised, if she was good, every Saturday night to give her a halfpenny.

"And so, sir," said the poor father, "I got the box when she was gone, for it used always to be near her; and I have brought it to you to open. It is just thirty-four weeks since the Saturday after the missionary meeting, and she had her halfpenny every Saturday night since; so I think you will find just seventeen pence in it for the missionaries."

So the box was opened, and the money counted; but what did they think when they reckoned up eighteen pence and one halfpenny! just three halfpence more than the thirty-four, which the father expected to find in it. He was quite puzzled; he counted it over and over, but there it was—eighteen pence and a halfpenny. He then asked Mr. B. if they could be mistaken in the number of *weeks since* the meeting. Mr. B. thought

a little, and said, "No, it is just thirty-four weeks since the Saturday after the missionary meeting." The poor man seemed distressed, and went away, saying he could not think how his little girl had got the other three halfpence.

Now we all know that many little children are sent on messages for their parents to shops; and perhaps the poor man might have thought of times when his dear child, who was now laid in the cold grave, had gone to buy a pennyworth of some little thing for him. But he could not think she was so ignorant as to suppose that she could please God by putting into the missionary box what did not belong to her, or that she could be so deceitful as to drop the penny into it, instead of paying it at the shop. But though he could not think ill of his little girl, he was very uneasy, and wished he could find out how these three halfpence came into the box.

Well, one day he was sitting alone, when a lady, who sometimes visited the cottages around him, came in to leave a book for him to read, and to talk to him, as she knew he was in sorrow. She spoke of the beloved child he had lost; and his mind was so full of these three halfpence, that he told her all about them, and said it made him very sorry to think he could not find out how they came into the missionary box. "I will tell you!" cried the lady, with much delight; "I will tell you!"

And so she told the poor father that one day she came in and found the little girl lying alone, and sat and talked to her for some time. The poor little thing was very ill, her mouth was dry, and her lips very hot; and so the lady said, "My dear, your mouth seems very dry and hot; should you not like something to cool it?"

"Oh, yes, ma'am!" said the dear

child, "if any thing could cool it and take away my thirst, I should indeed like it very much." She could hardly speak, her tongue was so parched.

"Well," said the lady, "would you like an orange?"

"Oh, yes, ma'am, very much!"

So the kind lady took three halfpence, and laid them on the bed, and said, "There, then, is three halfpence for you to buy an orange."

Well, the little box was near to her, and the lady said she saw her look at the box, and then at the three halfpence, and then at the box again. Surely at the time she felt her dry and parched mouth, and thought of the cool, juicy orange, but she thought also of the sad state of the poor, perishing heathen, and that she could do better without the orange than they could do without the Gospel; and so she put the three halfpence into the box, and this made up the sum—the

eighteen pence and the halfpenny, which Mr. B. found in it when it was opened.

Here was self-denial indeed! It was little that she could do, but she did what she could.

THE YOUTHFUL MISSIONARY.

The churchyard of Port Louis, in the island to the east of Madagascar, called the Mauritius, contains the graves of many missionaries. One of them is that of Mr. Sargent, a Wesleyan missionary; another, that of the faithful servant of God, the Rev. T. Thomason; a third, that of the excellent and devoted Mrs. Harriett Newell, whose life you may some time read.

Near the grave of Mrs. Newell is that of "little Willy," of whom I am now going to give you some account. This *dear* child accompanied his father and

mother to the Mauritius just as he had entered his sixth year. It was a great grief to his mother to quit her native land for a land of strangers, and during the voyage little Willy used often to try to comfort her when he saw her in trouble, by nursing and playing with his little baby brother, reading the Bible to his mother, and singing hymns to her. The beautiful hymn which begins with the following lines was a particular favourite with him:—

"We may, like the ships,
By tempests be tossed
On perilous deeps,
But cannot be lost;
Though Satan enrages
The wind and the tide,
The promise engages
The Lord will provide."

Sometimes, when all but his mother were leaving the cabin to go on deck, he would linger behind, and then get close to her, and softly whisper, "Now, mamma,

if you will not cry any more, till you get to the end of the voyage, you shall see what I will do for you."

On his arrival at the Mauritius, after a voyage of eleven weeks, he became much concerned for the spiritual welfare and instruction of the poor black people around him. He took great pains to teach a little negro girl who came to live in the family to read, and seemed greatly distressed that she could not understand him. She used always to be present at morning and evening prayers, but the black man-servant, who waited on the family, was not in the habit of attending. At this little Willy expressed much concern to his mother, saying, that Volsey had a soul to be saved as well as Oderene, the little negress. One day his mother went out for a few hours. On arriving at home in the evening, a most pleasing scene awaited her. Not knowing how *soon* she might return, little Willy had

collected the family around him for evening worship, and there was Volsey, the black man, sitting in the midst of them. True he could not understand English, but Willy had begged his mother's maid to explain to him what he read. Thus, "out of the mouth of babes and sucklings" can God, when He pleases, "perfect praise." As the family used to go to their place of worship on a Sunday morning, the mind of dear little Willy was greatly affected by seeing so many blacks go to and from the bazaar with merchandise. He longed for them to know about God, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. One day, when his mother was saying how sad it was that they were not taught about God and heaven, the dear little boy made no direct answer, but sweetly raised his voice in singing—

"Then black and white, and bond and free,
The servants of one Lord shall be;
And *nothing* shall be heard above
But sounds of praise, and peace, and love."

Only three months after his arrival in the Mauritius, it pleased God, whose ways are not as our ways, nor His thoughts as our thoughts, to take to Himself this lovely and promising child. One week he was climbing the mountain top, in the full glow of youthful health and spirits—another week he was laid on the bed of sickness and death. During his last short and sudden illness his dear mother never left him. He loved to have her near him. He loved to hear that blessed Word of God, which, though he was only six years and eight months old, was already his greatest delight. On one occasion he said to her, "Now, mamma, read the Holy Bible to me; that chapter about being born again." And, as she read the third of John, he softly whispered, "We *must* be born again." At another time, when she was reading to him about Jesus being crucified, he *said,* "*I* would have released Jesus, *mamma.*" Another time, after looking

sweetly at her for some minutes, he said, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want," and then sang—

"Oh that will be joyful, joyful, joyful,
When we meet to part no more!"

Thinking of his little brother, to whom he often repeated the following verse, he again sang—

"Little boy, with cheerful eye,
Bright and blue as yonder sky,
Come and learn betimes to love
That great God who reigns above."

Then, raising his eyes towards heaven, and waving his little hand, he said, "God is every where, mamma, managing all the worlds!" His afflicted mother, as she fondly knelt over him, said, "Would you rather die, my precious, or get well again?" He replied, "I would rather die, because if I am a Christian I shall go to heaven, and be far happier." Then clasping both his arms around her neck, he added, "Take me home, mamma—

take me home; you *must* come, and Louisa must come too." After this he was able to say but little more. Once or twice he softly breathed, "Papa," "Mamma," and then his freed and happy spirit was conveyed by angels to the bosom of that Saviour whom he loved. The next day, according to the custom of the country, in consequence of the extreme heat, his remains were conveyed to the little grave prepared for them, in the Port Louis churchyard. Thus the infant missionary, little Willy, and those eminent servants of God who had devoted their whole powers to His cause, rest together, as to their mortal frames, until the resurrection morn.

Dear children, who read this account, let the example of little Willy, though dead, yet speak to you.

GOD, THE WIDOW'S GOD.

It was the twilight of a November evening. In chill weariness, a widow drew her chair to the fire, and as she rested her weary frame for a few moments, her eye fell upon her little fatherless children, who, in subdued playfulness, were building their castles and bridges of blocks by the light of the flickering blaze of the fire. It was near the day appointed for thanksgiving—the first after her widowhood. She had felt an irrepressible desire that her little ones might miss no comfort that day which the tenderness of their father had ever led him, even in poverty, to supply.

As she looked upon her children, her thoughts went back, unconsciously, to the past—to the days of early marriage—of comparative affluence and ease, when, her husband's worth and standing acknowledged by all, they looked forward to

much earthly good for themselves and rising family. Then came failure in mercantile business, decline, poverty. Of the causes which led to this, the deep, devoted love of woman led her lip and her heart alike to be silent. Lower and lower in the valley had they gone down; and upon his death, to exertions by the needle she had added more laborious tasks, that she might keep her little ones together, and bring them up in that "nurture and admonition," and in those principles, which now were the only portion she could bestow.

She knew too well the value of His blessing who has promised to be "a father to the fatherless" not to desire it as the first portion for herself and her offspring. Next to this she desired for them a good education. By self-denial in other things, and the kind consideration of the teachers in the seminary and academy, she had been able to give her two oldest advan-

tages equal to other children of their age. And they met her wishes. They were good children. The youngest had an almost incurable inflammation of the eyes, which cost her mother many a solicitude. It was this little sufferer the children were seeking to amuse with their mimic buildings.

This day the widow had been washing. That delicate frame, so unused in early life to menial employments, shrunk not from hardship when her heavenly Father hedged up other ways of maintenance. Lower and lower as she had descended in the valley of humiliation, no murmur arose in her heart so she could preserve her Christian integrity, and eat the bread of honest independence, however coarse —so she could obey the injunction, "owe no man any thing, but to love one another," she was thankful and happy.

As she sat, the widow turned over and over in her mind the earnings of the *week, and her* debts to others. There

was her week's rent to be met, and her wood, which was an indispensable comfort, yet to be purchased, with other minor things; and her earnings would but satisfy for the payment of these. She felt the disappointment of not gratifying her children, but never had she suffered her rent to pass one week unpaid, nor could she now. "It would be *tempting* Providence," said she to herself, "and if I should sicken, or again have to take my poor half-blind child to the doctor, could I answer it? No—I must deny myself, and trust God's providence. He will provide." In her heart's agony she sighed aloud, while she repeated, "God will provide."

The sigh, the words, caught the ears of the children. They left their play and ran to their mother.

"Why do you cry, mother?" said they, on seeing her eyes wet with tears, "and what do you mean by saying God will *provide?*"

Taking the youngest upon her lap, and throwing an arm round each of the others, she told them the story of Abraham's trial of faith. She dwelt upon the faithfulness of God to His believing children, until she had lost sight of her own immediate trials, and her heart was filled with love and trust.

She was interrupted. There was a knock at the door.

"Mr. Fanning has sent you these chickens and these things for thanksgiving. Good night." The basket contained every needed supply.

"My children," said the widow, with an overflowing heart, "see in this the faithfulness of our Father in heaven. Let us kneel, and thank Him for His mercies. I had not wherewith to buy you a dinner. Truly, 'He will provide.'" And she knelt, and poured out her heart in love and gratitude to her faithful, covenant-keeping God.

And did she forget to crave blessings

upon him, who, under God, had relieved her wants? What light and joy had that almoner of heavenly bounty kindled in that lone dwelling! Happy the man who has the blessing of the widow and the widow's God!

"I WANT A BIBLE."

It was a cold, stormy day in the middle of February. Hill and valley, tree and shrub, were clothed in their white mantle, and the snow was still descending on the wings of a rude, chilling wind—*just such* a day when little boys like to *get close* to a good warm fire. On the

afternoon of this day might have been seen a poor old man slowly wending his way to a saw-mill, near the shore of Lake Erie. He was driving an ox-team, fastened to a sled, on which was a great saw-log.

The pelting storm beat rudely against his trembling frame, and his grey locks floated in the breeze, as with slow steps he walked before his oxen, who looked as though they wished their journey at an end. When he came to the mill he addressed the sawyer something like this:—

"I have come six long miles through this storm to your mill, and I want to sell you this log."

"Well," replied the man, "what do you want for it?"

"I want," said the old man, "I want a Bible. I have lived many years without the sacred book; my children have become religious—I am near the grave,

and have lived, until a few days ago, a stranger to religion myself—*I now want a Bible.*"

The log was bought, the Bible received, and he returned delighted with his prize.

"Precious Bible! what a treasure
Does the Word of God afford!
All I want for health and pleasure,
Food or medicine, shield or sword.
Let the world account me poor,
Having this I want no more."

THE LOG-KITCHEN;

OR, "SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD."

"SHE hath done what she could," said the Saviour, of one whose devotion to Him led her to the tomb of her crucified Lord, to watch for His resurrection. Young Christian, can *that* be said of you? "She hath done what she could." Oh, how full of encouragement is the simple story of Mary's love, especially to the female disciple of the Saviour!

There lived in a little log-hut, in the outskirts of an American state, a girl of sixteen. The only means of instruction ever enjoyed by her did not exceed six months, but her mind was awakened by an ardent desire for knowledge. After she had learned by heart the few books within her reach, she took the Bible, and though she had seldom heard the Gospel preached, yet the Spirit of God inspired her with wonder as she read the story of a Saviour's love. Her wonder was changed to penitence; she was humbled, she sought pardon, and, with a sense of forgiveness, came the inquiry, what she, a poor, ignorant child, could do for her Saviour. She thought of her brothers; she read to them over and over again the lessons she had learned from the Bible. She had heard of Sabbath schools, and with a determination to establish one among the few neighbours in her vicinity, she persuaded her father

to lend his kitchen for a school-room. When the Sabbath came, twenty poor, ignorant children filled the room. Soon her school increased; old men and middle-aged came, and the youthful teacher was happy, yet it was with a trembling heart she persevered.

Years passed, and in place of scores hundreds gathered in that school, each returning Sabbath, and it is now in the midst of a flourishing village. A neat church stands by the site of the old log-kitchen, and the songs of Zion echo from its walls, and the voice of the Gospel minister is heard from its pulpit on the Lord's day. That teacher sleeps! Her spirit has gone to receive the blessed commendation—"She hath done what she could."

Yes, she has ceased from her labours; but mark the sequel! A brother who listened to the first lessons of holiness that *trem*bled on her lips is preparing for the

Christian ministry; others are devoted, useful Christians, and one of the scholars is already on missionary ground. Verily "She hath done what she could."

To every young Christian we would say, "Go and do likewise." But do you ask what you can do? Look around you. Are your brothers and sisters better for your example? Are your companions looking to you for a pattern of holiness, or are you a stumbling-block over which they will plunge into the abodes of the lost? Say, is your heart steeped in the love of Christ? Is it burning with a missionary spirit? You can be a missionary even where you are, in your own town, in your own neighbourhood, for there are those all around you who seldom hear the sound of the Gospel. Seek them out; bring them to Christ. Thus you may bear fruit to the glory of God; and of you, too, it may be said, "She hath done what she could," and

your name will stand out, emblazoned upon the firmament of the upper world, as with the rays of a celestial sun. Is not the very thought enough to startle the soul with a thrill of heavenly rapture?

THE WORD SPOKEN IN SEASON.

I HAD once a young friend in whom I felt a deep and peculiar interest. She was the child of an early companion who had been called from this world at the moment her daughter was most exposed to its temptations and trials. To shield Elizabeth from their influence—to pray that they might not have dominion over her—to guard the first springs of thought and will in her youthful heart, were objects sufficiently powerful to reconcile the mother to a continued sojourn in this scene of sorrow. But when she heard her

Master's voice she obeyed it without a doubt or fear—her trusting spirit failed not—the promise was to her and her children, and He was faithful who had made it.

Elizabeth wept bitterly at the grave of her mother; but she returned again to the world, to its busy scenes and allurements, with as much eagerness and satisfaction as if death had never cast upon her path its dark and warning shadow.

Elizabeth had renewed her baptismal vows in the rite of confirmation, and before her God had promised to renounce the "pomps and vanities of this wicked world." As she stood at the communion table, subdued, penitent, and bathed in tears, many prayers arose that her heart might go with her lips, and that she might lead the rest of her Christian life according to this beginning. The offering was a sincere, but an incomplete offering; there was that sinful keeping

back a part of the price which has kept so many wholly out of heaven. That "wicked world" held out its rosy wreath and gilded trifles, and decked them in colours so fair, that the serpent was concealed. An indulgent father looked with fond admiration on the grace and loveliness of his child, friends not only looked, but spoke, and a regardless world sang the siren song of unmixed flattery.

I found Elizabeth immersed in a ceaseless whirl of dissipation. I found her at the same time scrupulously observing the Sabbath and most of those ordinances which her religious profession enjoined—in short, she was making a most vigorous effort to reconcile the service of God and Mammon. I asked if she could engage with interest in her devotional reading and other exercises, when so much of her time was given to company? "Oh, certainly!" she replied; "I never

omit a single religious duty, however much I may be engaged, or however late I may stay out."

I believe this was the case. One evening she came home at about twelve o'clock, and after giving an animated description of the amusements of the evening retired to her room. An hour after I was led to her chamber, and found her sitting by her table. Her lamp burnt dimly before her, her Bible was open, and a hymn-book lay beside it; her head was bent—she was sleeping over those hallowed pages!

I aroused her, and begged her to retire to bed. "Oh, no!" she replied, "I must first finish my chapter." Yes, the chapter must be read, and the evening form passed through; but she had forgotten how little bodily exercise profiteth, and that it is the effectual, fervent prayer alone that God has promised to hear.

Again was Elizabeth arrayed in the

garb of fashion, and ready for the amusements of the ball-room. As she stood at the glass, placing the last rose amidst her clustering locks, she hastily turned round, and said to me, "Why, what makes you look so sad? What *is* the matter?" And she threw her arms around my neck, and embraced me with all the enthusiasm of her young heart. "Come, don't be sad any more; put this lovely rose in my hair, and see how sweet it will look."

I kissed her cheek, and as I bade her good night, whispered, "Can you ask God's blessing on the dance, Elizabeth?" She gave me a quick, earnest look, and then hurried down the steps.

At an earlier hour than usual I heard Elizabeth's voice at the door. I was in my chamber, and when I went down to meet her I found that she had retired to her room. I followed her thither, wishing to see her a few moments before I *slept*. She supposed that all the family

had retired; and her door was unlocked. I entered, and found her on her knees before God, her hands uplifted, and her streaming eyes raised to heaven. "Hear my prayer, O Lord, I beseech Thee, and let my cry come before Thee."

I returned to her room in about half an hour, and welcomed her home.

"Yes," said she, "I *have* got home; in that bewildering ball-room I danced with the merriest, and laughed with the loudest, but there was an arrow here;" and she laid her hand on her heart.

"'*God's blessing on the dance!*' Why, these words rang in my ear at every turn, and I rejoice that they still ring there. Oh! if God will forgive the past, if He will yet receive me, I will turn my back upon all this gilded folly, and lay upon His altar what I once promised to lay there—my *whole heart*."

We knelt together, and asked God to strengthen the resolution now made in His

name. Our prayers have, we humbly trust, been heard; for among the group of lovely disciples who keep near their Lord, walking in His footsteps and bearing His cross, few are more humble, consistent, and devoted, than the once gay and thoughtless Elizabeth G——.

THE BOY WHO WOULD NOT SWEAR.

THE boys seemed of the ages from eight to twelve, and there were three apparently opposed to two. As I drew nearer I observed three to be in excessive passion, whilst one of the others looked with a calm steadfastness that was perfectly dignified; and the one who appeared his friend was earnest in persuading him to something.

"You did take it, then?"

"I told you I did not."

"Will you swear it?"

"I didn't take it."

"Swear it then," said another.

"He dare not swear it."

"Will you swear it by God?"

"Why should I swear it? I've told you I didn't take it."

"I won't believe you if you won't swear it."

"Do swear," said his friend, "and end it."

"Why should I swear it? I've said No, and that's enough."

All the three then began to pour out of their young mouths volleys of oaths and abuse, with voices in imitation of men; nor did there seem a curse or a blasphemy of which they were ignorant. God and Satan alike were invoked to bring down curses on him and themselves, threatening to thump him as long as they could stand over him.

As they approached him with doubled fists, the boy reddened with resentment,

and his eyes flashed with indignant fire. "Stand off!" he said, in an authoritative tone; "I won't strike first, but I'll let you see I can defend myself."

"Swear it, then, and we'll let you alone."

"If you come on me like savages, I'll say no more than NO; I've told you the truth."

His spirit and firmness arrested them.

One of them, with a curse in his teeth, said again, "Why don't you swear?"

"For a reason," he replied, "it seems you don't know; and all I wish is, that you'd leave me to myself, for I hate your blasphemies."

"Oh! oh!" the biggest boy cried, "a saint! a saint! a saint! a saint!"

This turned the current of their abuse, and now they all, with one voice, cried out, "A saint! a saint!" pointing the finger of scorn.

Though my spirit groaned within me *at the sight* and sound, my attention was

chiefly fixed upon the boy who stood so firm to his point. I was in a moment amongst them, and three, taking alarm from my countenance, caught up their sticks, and ran off very swiftly, before I could get hold of any. I did not pursue, as I expected to find them out afterwards, and I was anxious to know a little of "the saint."

I laid my hand on his head, and said, "What do they call you, my boy?"

"George, sir," he replied with readiness, but his voice still in agitation.

"Where do you live?"

"There, sir," pointing to a house near the end of the lane.

"You have had a strong contest with these sons of Belial?"

"Yes, sir; I'm glad they're gone."

"Tell me, George, why you would not yield to them when they wanted you to swear?"

"Because, sir, I am afraid to offend

God; and my father and mother always bid me be careful not to swear."

"How then came you to be in company with such boys?"

"I wasn't in company, sir; I only passed by just when they lost their ball, and they would have it that I'd picked it up, and they wouldn't believe me when I said I hadn't."

"Why did you not give them some stronger assurance without swearing?"

"Because, sir, father says, Remember what the Lord says, 'Let your conversation be yea, yea, nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil;' and he charges me to take notice, if they won't believe for yes or no, that they only want to tempt me, and, after all, would'nt believe me a bit the more for any more words; and so, sir, if they won't believe yes or no, I'm not going to say any more."

"But suppose they had all set upon

you, would you have remained steady to the point, without being afraid?"

"Why, sir, father says, 'George, mind you fear not them who after they have killed the body, have no more that they can do; fear Him, who, when He hath killed the body, can cast both body and soul into hell.' So, sir, I tried to set the law of God before me, and I hope I'd have bitten my tongue out before I'd sworn an oath to please them."

"Well, my lad, your father has taught you well by the rule of God's word; and God, in faithfulness to His promise, has given a blessing to his instruction. You owe much to such a father, and more to your heavenly Father, who gave you strength and simplicity to keep His word."

"I'm sure of that, sir, for I'm frightened when I hear such words as the boys used. I feel that I could soon learn them if God was to leave me to myself, and they are very catching, even when

one don't mean it; and so by keeping to father's great rule of yea, yea, and nay, nay, I'm saved from falling into that way of wicked words."

Now, when he repeated this, which has always been a favourite Scripture with me, I was exceedingly impressed by the present application; and, walking on with the boy, I remained silent, meditating upon the depth of this great rule. He, perceiving my mind engaged, set off in a trotting run homewards, and was soon at his father's cottage door.

THE HARDENED CRIMINAL SOFTENED.

THE following anecdote was related by *Dr. Barth*, of Wurtemberg, at the annual

meeting of the United Brethren, held in London, for the especial object of imploring the Divine blessing on their missions in Labrador, and a prosperous voyage to the vessel which carries out to their settlements yearly supplies of such necessaries as the inhospitable climate of that northern latitude cannot afford.

"In a town in the north of Germany a man was convicted of murder, and from the time of his condemnation several ministers, with much zeal and Christian love, endeavoured to render him sensible of the heinousness of his sin, hoping to lead him to employ his short remaining time in seeking peace with God, through the merits of our gracious Redeemer. But their efforts seemed all unavailing; his disposition remained savage, his heart obdurate, his mind unconvinced, and the time of his execution drew nigh, almost unregarded by him, to the deep pain and anxiety of his spiritual advisers. The

day before that appointed for his paying the penalty due to the outraged law of his country and his God, he was standing before the window of his cell, looking upon the scene without, and watching a little child of three years old playing by the side of a river, which ran by the walls of the prison. Suddenly the child fell into the water. The prisoner, alarmed and horrified at the imminent danger, immediately raised his voice and shouted; the mother was within hearing, and instantly saw her child struggling in the river. She plunged into the stream, and succeeded in rescuing her child from a watery grave. In the gratitude of her heart she hastened to the prison, to thank the person who had been the means of saving the life of her child. The poor criminal took the child into his arms, and his feelings so overpowered him that the hardened man shed tears.

"Sympathy with another's danger, and

joy over his rescue, had softened the heart which before was closed to every entreaty of his ministers, and he was now led to feel that he was a sinner and to seek for pardon."

This anecdote told powerfully in illustration of the blessing which attends the endeavours of Christians for the salvation of the heathen. Hearts which had remained shut up in selfishness, and had enjoyed no happiness in themselves neither, in the midst of their unconcern about their fellow-creatures' good, have been melted into tenderness at the discovery of suffering abroad, and have become solicitous about their own wants while learning to feel for the destitution of others. The hardened criminal, unconcerned about the destruction of his own body and soul, is roused with a concern for the loss of a mother's best treasure; he sounds the alarm, the child is rescued, and a thankful mother hastens

to carry to the outcast her thanks for a service rendered to her even by him He sees himself in a new light—has ever he been the instrument of conferring a benefit? And if the overjoyed parent cannot be satisfied without expressing her gratitude to the criminal who has done her good, will the criminal stand back and not yield thanks to the perfect Being who left a throne of glory to rescue the hopeless sinner from the wrath to come?

Ah, Saviour! make the tidings which come to us, of the triumphs achieved by the Gospel in distant lands, melt the hearts of careless sinners! Let them become conscious of their own want of a Saviour, and may they throw themselves into the arms of Him who will draw them out of the perilous waters of alienation from God, and bring them to a safe landing of a firm trust in the best Deliverer, and a consistent walk in imitation of His bright example!

CAREFUL SUSAN.

I AM a very little girl, but am growing larger every year; and, by and by, I hope to be more useful than I am now.

Father works hard out in the fields, and mother works hard at home, for she has a deal to do among so many of us. What a number of pennies it must take to buy all our clothes, and bonnets, and shoes! and then our breakfasts and dinners! Father had need work, and mother too.

I cannot work and get money to buy a loaf, but I take care not to waste a single crumb: let the crust be as hard as it will, I eat it all up.

If I can't buy wood and candles, I take *care not to* waste them. I am too little

to poke the fire and to snuff the candl
mother says I might set my clothes all
a blaze.

I don't know how much mother pa
for my last shoes; it took all the mon
at the corner of the cupboard, so I ta
care not to get into the wet and dirt, th
my shoes may last the longer.

I have had my bonnet a long wh
now; I never swing it about by t
strings, nor crush it up together, n
leave it lying about; and mother sa
that is the reason it has lasted so long.

I have not got many playthings, t
they would cost money, and wear out;
I play with the kitten, and pussey nev
costs any thing, and never wears out.

Mother says time is as good as mon
and that if I cannot help her much,
should not hinder her by being untid
so I keep every thing about me as ti
as I can. I put my little chair in t
corner when I have done with it, th
nobody may tumble over it. I try

learn to sew a little. Many a time mother has sent me with father's dinner into the fields. It would never do for mother to go, and carry baby too, while I was doing nothing. Sometimes I go over to the shop on an errand, so that if I get nothing, I try to save something, and mother says that is the same thing.

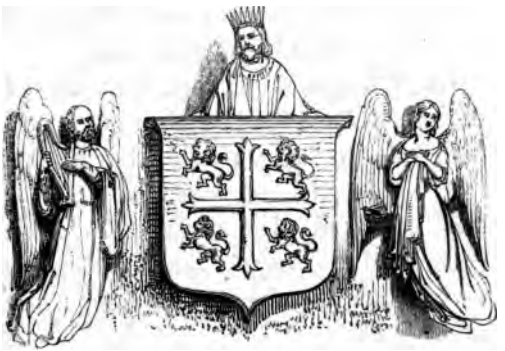
Oh, I forgot to tell you, that when I sit on my little stool, mother often puts baby into my lap. I hold him as carefully as I can; and when he smiles, I kiss him, and that makes him smile again. Mother says in time I shall nurse very prettily, but I can't toss baby about as she does.

Mother says that before another year has gone by, she will get me into the Sunday-school; and if she does, I'll try to be always in time, and mind all that is said to me.

I feel sure that I should get on, but mother says I must never trust my own

heart, for it will deceive me. I must ask God, for Jesus Christ's sake, to pardon all my sins, and help me in every thing.

I know that mother is right, and I hope I shall do as she tells me.



LINES

ON SEEING A LITTLE BIRD CHIRPING FROM ITS NEST, BUILT BENEATH AN ANGEL'S WING, IN ONE OF THE SCULPTURED SHIELDS ON THE GREAT DOOR OF WESTMINSTER HALL.

WHO taught thee, bird, to build
Beneath that angel's wing,
And, nestling in that sculptured shield,
Those twitt'ring notes to sing?

What leads thee from thy home
(That roof a royal hall)
Each morn and eve on wing to roam,
At thy lov'd nestlings' call?

Who careth day by day
For thee, thy mate, thy brood,
And fondly teacheth thee the way
To find their proper food?

Who watcheth from above,
Lest even thou should'st fall?—
'Tis One whose sweetest name is LOVE,
The common God of all.

Ay, little bird, thy nest
Hath in it that which tells
Poor troubled souls of endless rest,
Where sorrow never dwells.

It tells us we may build
Beneath a mightier wing,
And, guarded by a nobler shield,
May loftier carols sing.

It tells us of a home
(That, too, a royal hall)
From which no chosen guest can roam,
Whose King is Lord of all.

Then let us onward press,
An entrance there to gain,
The King is Christ our righteousness,
For our redemption slain.

SPRING, SUMMER, AUTUMN, AND WINTER.

"WELL, Spring! what have you got to say, with your fresh, green leaves, and grateful breezes? We are very glad to see you, and heartily bid you welcome, for you make the world a very pleasant place to live in. What have you to say, Spring?—what have you to say?"

"It was not I, but God, who made the world so pleasant as it is. He formed the green leaves, and sent abroad the grateful breezes, and beautified the earth. All this He has done to make you happy, therefore you ought to love Him, to obey Him, praise Him, and to magnify His *name for ever*."

"Well, Summer! what have you to say, with your fragrant flowers, your singing birds, your bees, and your butterflies? What should we do without you! If your sun did not shine on the earth, and light up the heavens, we should not be so well off as we are. What have you to say, Summer?—what have you to say?"

"It is not my sun that shines on the earth and lights up the heavens. I never yet made a fragrant flower, a singing bird, a bee, or a butterfly. God made them all in His wisdom and goodness; therefore you ought to look up to Him, and to love Him, to obey Him, to praise Him, and to magnify His name for ever!"

"Well, Autumn! what have you to say, with your ripe, clustering fruits and golden grain? Even the green leaves of spring and the fair flowers of summer would be of little value to us, if we had

neither orchards nor corn-fields. We owe you much, Autumn! Do you think so? What have you to say, Autumn? —what have you to say?"

"Owe me much! You owe me nothing. There is not a ripe pear or apple on the trees, not a single yellow ear of corn in the wheat-field, but it is the gift of God. It is God alone who gives seed-time and harvest. 'He crowns the year with His goodness, His paths drop fatness,' Psalm lxv. 11. To Him, then, your thanksgiving should be offered. You ought to love Him, to obey Him, to praise Him, and to magnify Him for ever."

"Well, Winter! we have come to you at last. What have you to say? If your sharp frost did not destroy thousands of insects and purify the air, and if your fleecy snows did not protect the seeds, and render the ground more fruitful, we should be sadly off. Few things are *more* pleasant than a fine, dry, frosty

morning; so we would not part with you, Winter, on any account. You have done much for us. What have you to say, Winter?—what have you to say?"

"I have done nothing at all for you, therefore you need not thank me. If God had not sent the sharp, frosty air, you would never have felt it. If God had not sent the flaky snow, you would never have seen it. If you feel grateful for the winter season or the summer, the spring season or the autumn, God alone deserves your thanks. You are bound to love Him, and to magnify Him for ever!"

You see, then, that Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter, declare God's goodness, and proclaim that "the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods." Psalm xcv. 3. If then, we forget the Father of mercies, and His Son Jesus Christ, every green leaf of spring, every flower of summer, every fruit of autumn,

every flake of snow in winter, even as every part of the Bible, is against us.

ANNA FELL.

CHILDREN, perhaps you never heard
Of little Anna Fell;
Then listen to the simple tale
Which I'm about to tell.

Anna had once a happy home,
A father good and mild;
But he is gone, and she is left
The lonely widow's child.

They have no cottage by the rill,
With jes'mine round the door,
And wild flowers scatter'd everywhere,
Like some whom we call poor,

But in the crowded city street
She and her mother dwell;
Their little room, so dark and damp,
It makes me sad to tell.

She sees the rich man's costly dome,
Where wealth and power abide,
And in the street his children pass
Her by with looks of pride,

Because her frock is old and worn,
Her bonnet faded too;
Alas! 'tis hard to suffer want
With plenty in our view.

But Anna is a happy child,
Far happier, it may be,
Than some who wear the jewell'd robe
'Mid scenes of revelry.

For in the Sabbath-school she learns
That Jesus blest the poor,
And that, far more than glittering gold,
He loves the heart that's pure.

And so she shares her mother toil
From early morn till even,
Cheerful and happy, for she knows
That she shall rest in heaven.

And when at night she lays her down
Upon her little bed,
She thinks that Jesus had no home,
No place to lay His head.

Children, amid your happy homes,
Where love and plenty dwell,
Come, learn to love your Saviour's name,
Like little Anna Fell.

THE WIDOW.

It was a cold and bleak evening in a most severe winter. The snow, driven by the furious north wind, was piled into broad and deep banks along our streets. Few dared or were willing to venture abroad. It was a night which the poor will not soon forget.

In a most miserable and shattered tenement, somewhat remote from any other habitation, there then resided an aged woman, all alone—and yet not alone.

During the weary day, in her excessive weakness, she had been unable to step beyond her door-stone, or to communicate her wants to any friend. Her last morsel of bread had been long since consumed, and none heeded her destitution. She sat at evening by her small fire, half famished with hunger—from *exhaustion* unable to sleep, preparing her

mind to meet the dreadful fate from which she knew not how she would be spared.

She had prayed that morning, in full faith, " Give me this day my daily bread," but the shadow of evening had now descended upon her, and her faithful prayer had not been answered.

While such thoughts were passing through her weary mind, she heard the door suddenly open, and as suddenly close again ; and found deposited in her entry, by an unknown hand, a basket crowded with all those articles of comfortable food, which had the sweetness of manna to her.

What were her feelings on that night God only knows, but they were such as rise up to Him, the Great Deliverer and Provider, from ten thousand hearts every day.

Many days elapsed before the widow learnt through what messenger God had

sent to her that timely aid. It was at the impulse of a little child, who on that dismal night, seated at the cheerful fire-side of her home, was led to express the generous wish that that poor widow, whom she had sometimes visited, could share some of the numerous comforts and good cheer. Her parents followed out the benevolent suggestion, and a servant was soon despatched to her mean abode with a plentiful supply.

What a beautiful glimpse of the chain of causes, all fastened at the throne of God! An angel, with noiseless wing, came down and stirred the peaceful breast of that child; and with no pomp or circumstance of the outward miracle, the widow's prayer was granted.

CHARLES WOODFORD'S HOLYDAYS.

SURELY never was there a happier boy *than* Charles Woodford! He has much

to make him happy. Kind and tender parents, sisters who dearly love him, and a comfortable and pleasant home. He has many friends among his schoolfellows, who are glad to be often with him; and twice in the year he has a great treat, which he thinks of from Midsummer till Christmas, and then from Christmas till Midsummer comes again. He always goes to spend the holydays with his grandfather, who lives in an old farmhouse in the country; and both in summer and winter Charles finds plenty of enjoyment there.

In summer there is the sheep-shearing and the haymaking, besides the long rambles in the wood, or on the hill side, with Rover, the faithful spaniel, who is nearly as old as Charles, and has lived all his life at the farm, as did his mother before him. Many a ramble have Charles and Rover enjoyed together, making their way through the tangled

brushwood, and loitering in the sunny copse or in the mossy dingle, where violets and primroses grow.

In winter there is skating and sliding on the large pond, and making houses and men of snow. Then there are indoor pleasures more than I can mention, and one above the rest, of which Charles is never weary. He delights to sit with his grandfather in the long evenings beside the bright, blazing fire, and to hear the good man's stories of old times, and things that happened when he was a boy. Great changes have taken place since then, Farmer Woodford often says, for 'tis more than fifty years ago; but he has never seen reason to alter his opinion, that there is no book like the Bible, and no wisdom to compare with that which leads to the fear of God.

"Remember this, my boy," said he, one Christmas night, as he sat in his old-*fashioned* chair, while Charles was eating

his supper of bread and preserved fruit; "there is a great deal said in the world about learning and science, and you might think, when you hear some people talk, that nothing else was necessary to make a man happy either in this life or the next. Now, I have not any thing to say against learning; on the contrary, I value the little I have myself been able to gain, and I honour it in others; but I am grieved when I see it put in the place of religion, and my heart aches when I read of men who are seeking it so earnestly that they neglect to secure that which is infinitely more important, the salvation of the soul. What shall it profit a man in the day of judgment, though he should understand all mysteries and all knowledge, if he has never come to Christ for pardon of his sins, or ever sought to learn the way to heaven? Remember, then, in all your studies, to keep the end of life in view. Try to ad-

vance in learning, for God gives us understanding and abilities that we may use them to His glory; but do not forget that you have a soul to be saved—a soul that must live for ever and ever, long after this earth, and all that it contains, shall have been burned up with fire, and when the planets shall have ceased to run their course, and the sun shall no more give light. Oh, remember that you are living for eternity! and seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, then all other things will find their proper place, and be sought in the proper way."

THE TEMPTATION.

One day Albert brought his arithmetic and slate from school to practise upon a sum, which he had for a long time been *employed* about, but which he had not yet

been able to finish correctly. His teacher had now explained the process of the work very clearly to him, and had required him to hand in a correct result of the calculation on the following morning. Mr. Forrester, for this was the name of Albert's teacher, knew that the sum was difficult. He knew that the little boy would have to work very hard to do it, but he did not excuse him on this account, for he was very sure that if he did not learn to persevere and overcome difficulties when a boy, he would make neither a useful nor a happy man.

When Albert arrived at home he told his sister Mary what he had to do. So when tea was over, and little Charlie had been put to bed, Mary intended to find some quiet employment for herself, and then she thought that her brother could go on with his work at the round table in the parlour without being disturbed. At first she was about to bring her drawing

materials, and finish a sketch which she had begun. Then she happened to think that this might attract Albert's attention, and so make it less easy for him to perform his sum. Afterwards she thought of taking a book and reading. Finally, however, she decided upon sewing, for this, she rightly supposed, would not interrupt his calculations at all.

So they sat down at the round table, Mary with her sewing and Albert with his slate and arithmetic. For over half an hour the little boy worked very pleasantly and industriously. Then a lady came in to call on his sister. For a few minutes after the visitor's entrance Albert tried very hard to attend to his work, but somehow he could not very well succeed; the talking interrupted him continually.

The lady soon went out, but after she was gone, Mary observed that Albert seemed very tired, and almost discou*raged.* Besides, it was nearly his usual

bed-time, so she advised him to put away his slate and arithmetic, telling him that she would call him early in the morning, as he would then feel more fresh and hopeful, and could go on much more readily with his work.

So Albert put away his things very orderly, looking, however, a little sad. Then Mary thought she would tell him a story, and by the time it was ended he began to feel quite happy again. He then took his little lamp, and bidding his sister good-night, went up stairs to his little chamber. After praying to God, he lay down in his comfortable bed, and soon fell fast asleep.

The next morning he was very early at work upon his sum. For a time he went on briskly, but after breakfast several slight interruptions prevented him from proceeding so rapidly in his task. School time drew near, and he began to fear that he should not succeed.

When it wanted about half an hour of the time of preparing for school, he went into another room in search of a knife to cut his slate-pencil smoothly with, for it was rough, and scratched the slate. Just as he had taken the knife in his hand, he observed upon a table in the room the key to his arithmetic. His sister Mary had used it the evening before, and had left it there. Albert laid his hand upon the book; his sum was not done, perhaps would not be in proper season, and in such a case he was likely to be punished. He had not been idle; on the contrary, he had worked very hard. Why might he not copy the answer from the Key? For a moment he hesitated, then going to the table, he mentally said,—"No, it would be wrong; the Bible teaches that it is wrong to *deceive*."

He went immediately to his work, and before it was time to leave home for school the sum was correctly finished.

THE DARK; OR, TRUST IN GOD.

One cold frosty winter's evening, when the stars were shining out most beautifully, but there was no moon visible, I heard a sweet boy, of four years old, say to his little sister, who was fifteen months younger than himself, "Come, sister, with me into our play-room, and I will shew you such beautiful stars; you know when I said, 'Twinkle, twinkle, little star,' to mother the other day, you asked me what a star was, and now, when I went to get my box of bricks, I saw out of the window nothing but stars." "No, no *boder*," said his lisping companion, "me not like go in play-room now—all dark, dark, and baby not like dark. Baby see stars when play-room light." "But you can't see stars when there is light, baby; mother says they only come at night: besides," added this dear child, "why should you mind the dark? do not you know God

is there just the same as if it was light, and the room is full of good, bright angels to take care of us? if we could see them, it would be quite light." He prevailed, and the little girl allowed herself to be led into the play-room, where, in her admiration of the stars, she soon lost all her fear of the dark, at least for the time. Now, my young friends, this is *quite true*, for I heard it myself; and what was it, think you, that made this dear boy so fearless? His *faith*, his trust in God. Oh, dear children, if you will but *believe* with all your hearts, that your God, your Saviour is ever near you, that blessed assurance, while it stops you from committing many a sin, will fill you also with peace and confidence, for no place can be dark to those who feel they have a dear Friend and Saviour always at their side. What is it that enables our good Missionaries to go through so much, to endure *such fatigues*, to face such dangers, and

cheerfully even to hazard their lives? It is that they know Jesus is with them, and that "He gives His angels charge over them," either to carry them safely through all trials and temptations here, or, happier far for them, to transport their souls to Him in paradise? The little boy of whom I have spoken above is now a big boy, nearly fourteen instead of four years old, and his sister is, of course, a great girl also, and no longer afraid of a dark play-room; but they have another little sister just five, and she shewed her faith in Jesus in so touching a manner the other day, that I am tempted to tell it to you, my young readers, and thus end my story. She said to her mother: "I have been thinking a great deal about the judgment day, and what God will say to every one: will He not say to me, mother,—'Have you been good, little girl?'" "And what will you reply, my child?" said her mother. She did not answer, and her mother con-

tinued, "Will you not be obliged to say, you have often been *very* naughty?" A deep sigh, and a faint "Yes," were heard. "Well, but what will God do then? for not one that is naughty can enter heaven." "Ah, but, mother," said the child, with the greatest quickness, "I love the Lord Jesus, and He will say, 'This is my lamb, she loves me, and I love her; forgive her sins for my sake,' and God will let me in!"

THE TRUTH-SPEAKING BOY.

One of the first lessons which young Washington, the great American statesman, received from his faithful parents, was, the importance of always speaking the truth; and they enjoyed a satisfactory reward for their attention to his duty; for through his childhood "the law of truth was in his mouth," so that he was not *known* in one instance to tell a falsehood,

either to obtain a desired indulgence, or to escape a deserved punishment or reproof. His character as a lover of truth was so well known at the school which he attended, that the children were certain of being believed, when they related any thing, if they could say "George Washington says it was so." In all the little disputes of his school-fellows, he was called on to say which party was right, and his decisions were always satisfactory.

When he was ten years old, his worthy father died, and he became the care of an anxious mother, whose fortune was not sufficient to enable her to give him more than a plain English education. He was very fond of studying mathematics, and applied his mind diligently in improving all the instruction which he could get in that science. As he grew up to manhood, he was remarkable for the strength and activity of his frame. In running, leaping, and managing a horse, he was un-

equalled by his companions; and he could with ease climb the heights of his native mountains, to look down alone from some wild crag upon his followers, who were panting from the toils of the rugged way. By these healthful exercises the vigour of his constitution was increased, and he gained that hardiness so important to him in the employments designed for him by his Creator. Mrs. Washington was an affectionate parent: but she did not encourage in herself that imprudent tenderness, which so often causes a mother to foster the passions of her children by foolish indulgences, and which seldom fails to destroy the respect which every child should feel for a parent. George was early made to understand that he must obey his mother, and therefore he respected as well as loved her. She was kind to his young companions, but they thought her stern, because they always *felt that* they must behave correctly in

her presence. The character of the mother, as well as that of the son, are shewn in the following incident. Mrs. Washington owned a remarkably fine colt, which she valued very much, but which, though old enough for use, had never been mounted; no one would venture to ride it, or attempt to break its wild and vicious spirit. George proposed to some of his young companions, that they should assist him to secure the colt until he could mount it, as he had determined that he would try to tame it. Soon after sunrise, one morning, they drove the wild animal into an enclosure, and with great difficulty succeeded in placing a bridle on it. George them sprang upon its back, and the vexed colt bounded over the open fields, prancing and plunging to get rid of his burden. The bold rider kept his seat firmly, and the struggle between them became alarming to his companions, who were watching him. The speed of

the colt increased, until at length, in making a furious effort to throw his conqueror, he burst a large blood vessel, and instantly died. George was unhurt, but was much troubled by the unexpected result of his exploit. His companions soon joined him, and when they saw the beautiful colt lifeless, the first words they spoke were, "What will your mother say —who can tell her?" They were called to breakfast, and soon after they were seated at the table, Mrs. Washington said: "Well, young gentlemen, have you seen my fine sorrel colt in your rambles?" No answer was given, and the question was repeated; her son George then replied—"Your sorrel colt is dead, mother." He gave her an exact account of the event. The flush of displeasure which first rose on her cheek soon passed away; and she said calmly: "While I regret the loss of my favourite, *I rejoice in my son, who always speaks the truth.*"

THE TWO HORSES.

"MOTHER," said Henry, one day, "I was much amused as I was coming home this afternoon, looking at two carts and two horses, which were fastened together, going along the street."

"Why, said Henry's mother, "was it so strange and amazing to see a sight which is so often seen in the street?"

"I will tell you, mother," said Henry. "The first horse was a good horse, who knew how he ought to go in a cart, and he obeyed the least word; but the other horse (I suppose he must have been a young one, but he was as large as the other,) did not seem to know how to go at all; but what was worse, he would not be taught. It was really funny to see when the first horse

was trying to go along a pretty good pace, how the other ill-tempered creature would try to pull him back as hard as he could for several minutes, till just when he felt the first horse pulling with all his strength, then he would start off on a sudden with a run, and it would be some minutes again before the first horse could regain a regular pace. They kept going on in this way as long as they were in sight, although the master of the second horse was coaxing him sometimes and sometimes whipping him, and the first horse was trying all he could to teach him how to go. And you cannot think how many strange and cunning capers the second horse showed off in trying to go exactly different to the way they wished him to go."

"Whilst you were considering and blaming the bad temper and obstinacy of the one horse, and being pleased with the *good tem*per and obedience of the other,

did it never bring to your thoughts of what advantage a *good education* is, even to horses? or, to speak in the words properly used—that he should have been well trained and broken into harness whilst he was a colt?"

"I did think, mother," Henry answered, "it was a pity they had let him grow up a great horse without teaching him how to draw a cart."

"From this little affair, my dear boy, you may be reminded how much those poor children are to be pitied whose misfortune it is to grow up, some without any education, and more with a bad or mistaken one. I mean by mistaken, an education which is not fitted to make them *useful* in the station in which it has pleased God to place them. Some children have parents so indulgent, that they grow up selfish, self-willed, and ignorant. The least thing will get them an excuse to their teacher, and thus they are care-

less about learning their tasks; and although they may have the advantage of the best schools and masters, they cannot but grow up, as I have said, ignorant; and they will be too old and too obstinate to submit to be taught, and they will wish and expect every body to yield to their wishes, as they have grown up humoured and spoiled by those who ought to have governed and restrained them. Henry, you sometimes think (do you not?) I am rather too strict—rather too particular about your lessons? that they are rather too hard and too long?"

"Oh! dear mother," said Henry quickly, "I do not mean nor wish to think so: but I know I am not as good and grateful to you, for your kind and watchful care over me, *always*, as I ought to be: but I hope as I grow older I *shall* grow wiser and better."

"My dear Henry, we are all unprofit*able servants* to our gracious God and

Saviour; we need His grace to keep us from falling into sin every moment; for which grace to help us, you learned in your Catechism, 'you must call for by diligent prayer.' Then, my dear boy, you know your Saviour has promised, that 'those who seek shall find.' Thus taught we shall be fitted for our duties in this life; but what is of the greatest consequence, as this life is so short, it will fit us for that never-ending life, where we must live for ever."

JAMES WATT'S BOYHOOD.

A FRIEND of Mr. Watt's one day came upon young James, stretched upon the ground, tracing with chalk all kinds of cross lines.—"Why do you suffer this child thus to trifle away his time?" exclaimed the visitor; "send him to school." "You will do well to delay your judg-

ment," said the father; "before condemning him, be good enough to find out his occupation." The harsh judgment was speedily reversed. The child of six was solving a problem in geometry. "James," said Mrs. Muirhead, one day, to her nephew, "I never saw any boy more given to trifling than you are; can't you take a book, and employ yourself usefully? There have you been sitting a whole hour without speaking a single word. Do you know what you have been about all this time? You have done nothing but shut and open, and open and shut, the lid of the tea-kettle; and, first, you have put the saucer in the steam from the spout, and then you have held the silver teaspoon in it; and then you have done nothing but pore over them, and bring together the drops formed by condensation on the surface of the china or the spoon. Are you not ashamed of *spending* your time in that way?"

The boy was watching the action of steam, and he afterwards made the improvements to the steam-engine which have led to the extensive use of that power in the present day.

READ, AND YOU WILL KNOW.

READ, and you will know. This is what Mrs. Jones used to say, every day, to her son William. She would take him in her lap to talk to him. Little William wanted to know a great many things. His mother did not always tell him, but said, —*Read, and you will know.*

Then William considered, and said to himself, I want to know many things. Mother says, that if I read I will know. So he tried very hard, and soon learned to read. Then he read many beautiful books. He learned something from every one of them. After a while he could read

every book in his mother's library. Little William Jones grew up to be a man. He had a great deal of knowledge. He was a wise and great man. He was made a judge, and went and lived in India. Then they called him Sir William Jones.

Read, and you will know. There are thousands of good books, and if you will only learn to read, you can know all that is in a good book. Some foolish children do not care about learning. They do not know how pleasant it is to read the histories which are in books. Little child, take good care to learn how to read. It will do you good as long as you live.

Read, and you will know. I say this over again, because I wish you to remember it. If you do not learn to read while you are a child, it is likely you will never learn at all. Read a little every day. *Get* your friends to shew you what you

cannot make out by yourself. Never skip any hard word. In a little time you will be able to read every word. Mind your stops, and take care to understand what you read. Do you know the little rhyme—

"When house, and land, and goods are spent,
Then learning is most excellent?"

Read, and you will know. What will you know? You will know all things that are in books. You will know how the world was made. You will know about the people that lived in the world thousands of years ago. You will know about Adam, and Noah, and Aaron, and Moses, and David, and Solomon. Read, and you will know what you were made for. You will know how to get to heaven. You will know all about Christ, who died for sinners. You will know what becomes of good children when

they die. Now, remember what I s
Read, and you will know.

MORNING HYMN.

Look on a little sinful child,
Giddy, wayward, guilty, wild,
O Jesus! lovely, meek and mild,
My Saviour!

Oh guide and guard me through this day,
Keep me in wisdom's pleasant way,
And may I from thy steps ne'er stray,
My Saviour!

And if it be that I must die
Ere on my bed again I lie,
Receive my soul with my last sigh,
My Saviour.

Then let me join the heavenly throng,
To love and praise in endless song,
When I shall ne'er again do wrong,
My Saviour!

FRUIT FROM THE PRECIOUS SEED.

When travelling some years ago in a distant part of Ireland, the writer was asked by a brother clergyman very anxiously, and with much warmth, about Mr. Roe's Sunday School; and the inquirer mentioned the following circumstance as that which led him to feel peculiar interest in that institution. A little girl, niece to the narrator, had been sent by her widowed mother as boarder to a school kept in Kilkenny by a Roman Catholic lady. The Protestants who attended this school were regularly sent to the Sunday-school at St. Mary's Church, and this child among the number. After a time she fell ill—her lungs were attacked, and consumption began its silent and insidious progress. In consequence of increasing debility the child was taken home; and an eminent physician in the neighbourhood having been consulted, declared in

the child's hearing that she was past recovery, and that apparently her course was nearly run. The narrator, who was present, described the little girl as overwhelmed with grief at hearing the melancholy tidings. He administered what consolation he thought suited to her case and age, and took his leave. Residing in a distant parish, this clergyman could not see his niece again for some weeks; but when he was permitted to visit her, his very first look convinced him that she had undergone a change. Her tears were dried up—her sadness was dissipated—her fears were removed, and the peace and joy which ruled in her heart were legible in her countenance to all who saw her. She no longer shrank from the thought of dying. Jesus was precious to her soul; and she expressed herself fearless of the passage through the valley of the shadow of death, knowing that He would *be with* her. Her uncle was amazed, and

rejoiced. He asked her what had produced this change, so sudden, so unlooked for, so happy. She replied—"When first I heard that I was dying, I was very much frightened, for I did not expect it; but after you left me I began to think of all that I had learned of Miss C. M—, in Mr. Roe's Sunday-school at Kilkenny; and now I am not afraid." Soon after, she fell asleep.

It often happens that the ministers of the Gospel are not permitted to enjoy any great share of the fruit of their labours. The Lord oftentimes uses one to sow, another to reap; but Mr. Roe was in this respect highly favoured; for as he sowed, so he reaped. This was remarkably the case with his Sunday-school labours; to pass by many other instances in proof of which, two which seem particularly remarkable may suffice. One is, that before his death, Mr. Roe was enabled to reckon up no fewer than *eighteen* ordained cler-

gymen, all of whom had been scholars in his Sunday-school; together with three persons employed in lay situations, one in the Jewish Mission, one in Africa, and another in the East. Of the eighteen clergymen, four had finished their course before their beloved teacher: and it is interesting to see the brief remark which Mr. Roe has placed after their names in one of his note-books—"Died in the Lord." It tells a long and interesting tale of seed sown, of grace given, of a Saviour loved, of Heaven secured.

THE SIXPENNY PIECE.

"LITTLE Sixpence, little Sixpence, what shall I do with you? Suppose I buy cakes with you, and eat them, eh?"

"Well, I shall go to the confectioner's *then*: some of me will go to buy meat

and clothes for him, which will be very good; some will buy flour and sugar, and butter, and eggs to make more cakes with, and other boys will buy and eat them; but when your cakes are eaten, and the boys' cakes, you and the boys have nothing, and you will want more cakes as soon as you have a little money again."

"Well, little Sixpence, what shall I do with you then? what shall I do with you? Suppose I buy a whistle with you?"

"Then some of me will buy food and clothes for the woman who keeps the shop, which will be very good; and some will be sent to fetch more toys: but when you begin to blow your whistle, all the people in the house will cry out against you, and you must go into the field, that you may not annoy anybody with your noise; and soon you will be tired, yourself, with whistling: what good then will I have done you?"

"*Well, little* Sixpence, little Sixpence,

what shall I do with you? Suppose you tell me how to get good by you?"

"Suppose you give me to the Lord Jesus, and put me into the box the next time they make a collection at the Sunday-school."

"Oh, Sixpence, Sixpence, now you are sadly out!—they will take all the money and buy books with it for the Library, and we have got plenty books at home which I have never read yet, and care nothing about them; so what good to me from putting you into the box at the Sunday-school?"

"But did not I tell you that you must give me to the Lord Jesus first? and does not He say, if you forsake any thing for His sake, you shall have manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting? Suppose, as you drop me into the box, the Lord make you begin to care about the books you have *at home,* why there is a whole lot of books *all at once* He gives you, which are now

no good to you at all :—suppose He make your heart glad, when the other boys go to the Library every Sunday, and take out some of the new books that will be bought with the collection, will not that be good to you?—suppose that sulky boy that tried to trip you up the other day should read one of them, and the Lord make him think that he should not do to you as he would not wish to be done by—"

"Very well, Sixpence, very well—you need not say any more, I know now what to do with you: you are a very good, round, little fellow to talk with; so go into that piece of paper, and I will seal you up, and write upon you, 'For the Sunday-school Library.'"

FABLE OF THE VIOLET.

On a sunny bank, covered with many kinds of grass and wild flowers, grew a tuft of purple violets. There were several blossoms on this tuft, and one was finer than the rest. They had a very snug place to blow in; the bank was sheltered from the cold wind by the hedgerow above it, and the long thick grass around cast a pleasant shade over them, even in the brightest part of the day.

April had nearly passed away, and the weather was warm and fine: very happy might these violets have been in their peaceful home; and so indeed they all were, excepting the one which was the most beautiful. She often felt discontented with her lot, and would peep out from amidst the waving grass, as much as she could, into the sunshine; by so *doing she* became a little faded, and lost

some of her sweetness; but she did not know that.

"How dull it is to be shut up here!" she would say. "No one ever comes this way; how should they? There is no path by this stupid bank for them to walk on. I wish I had been placed any where else; perhaps some one would have noticed me then, and gathered me for a nosegay. I should have liked that of all things."

Her wish was soon granted. May-day came; and the children of the next village were busy, early in the morning, making up their garlands, or finishing those they had begun the day before. Some tied up the flowers, and some went into the lanes and hedgerows to gather more. One little girl came at length, with a large nosegay she had picked, to the bank where our violet grew, and seeing how handsome she was, gathered

her also. At first the violet felt proud and happy at leaving her quiet home, and pleased herself with thinking how much she should be admired; but her happiness did not last long. When the little girl got back to the cottage where her companions were at work, she sat down on the kitchen floor, threw the flowers she had brought on the ground beside her, and began to tie them together as fast as she could. It was time the garland should be finished, and every one was in a great hurry.

Nobody noticed the violet; she was pushed about here and there, and no one seemed to think her worth having. She began to feel very angry and uncomfortable, but that did no good. At last, she was fastened to the garland with some other small flowers, and the children set off to carry it round the village.

Poor violet! She had her wish, and

yet she was not happy. On the contrary, every moment made her more miserable. She was a good deal hurt and bruised, and felt very faint. What would she not have given now to be once again on the pleasant bank with her brothers and sisters; to feel once again the soft south wind amongst their leaves! Alas! her repentance came too late. Her slender stalk was soon broken by the rough handling of the children, and she dropped upon the road, where she was trodden under foot and crushed to pieces by the next person who passed that way.

We should learn from the story of the violet to be contented, whatever our lot may be. We do not know what is really best for us; and should try to be thankful for the blessings we have, instead of wasting our time in wishing for those we have not. If discontented people had the very things they desire, they would still find something to complain of, and,

if they spoke the truth, would confess that they were not really happier than they had been before.

SIRRAH, THE SHEEP-DOG.

"I WAS sent to a place in Tweeddale, called Stanhope," (says James Hogg, the poet, in his *Shepherd's Calendar*), "to bring home a wild ewe that had strayed from home. The place lay at the distance of about fifteen miles, and my way to it was over steep hills and athwart deep glens;—there was no path, and neither Sirrah nor I had ever travelled the road before. The ewe was brought in and put into a barn over-night; and, after being frightened in this way, was set out to me in the morning to be driven home by herself. She was as wild as a roe, and bounded away to the side of a *moun*tain like one. I sent Sirrah on a

circular route wide before her, and let him know that he had the charge of her. When I left the people at the house, Mr. Tweedie, the farmer, said to me: 'Do you really suppose that you will drive that sheep over these hills, and out through the midst of all the sheep in the country?' I said, I would try to do it. 'Then let me tell you,' said he, 'that you may as well try to travel to yon sun.' The man did not know that I was destined to do both the one and the other! Our way, as I said, lay over wild hills, and through flocks of sheep. I seldom got a sight of the ewe, for she was sometimes a mile before me, sometimes two; but Sirrah kept her in command the whole way—never suffered her to mix with the other sheep—nor, as far as I could judge, ever to deviate twenty yards from the track by which he and I went the day before. When we came over the great height towards Manor Water, Sirrah and his charge

happened to cross it a little before me, and our way lying down hill for several miles, I lost all traces of them, but still held on my track. I came to the two shepherds' houses, and asked if they had seen any thing of a black dog, with a branded face and a long tail, driving a sheep? No; they had seen no such thing; and, besides, all their sheep, both above and below the houses, seemed to be unmoved. I had nothing for it but to hold on my way homeward; and at length, on the corner of a hill at the side of the water, I discovered my trusty coal-black friend sitting with his eye fixed intently on the burn below him, and sometimes giving a casual glance behind to see if I was coming:—he had the ewe standing there safe and unhurt. When I got her home, and set her at liberty among our own sheep, he took it highly amiss. I could scarcely prevail with him to let her *go;* and so dreadfully was he affronted

that she should have been let go free after all his toil and trouble, that he would not come near me all the way to the house, nor taste any supper when we got there. *I believe he wanted me to take her home and kill her.*"

The close of this story shews the character of the dog in a very striking manner, which we are rather apt to admire: he felt revenge, and did not like the wicked sheep to go unpunished, after having given him so much trouble. But we hope our readers will not take the dog for an example to them in this respect. We will give them a better example to go by. About twelve years ago, the missionaries in Sierra Leone were engaged in considering the case of a very wilful boy, who had for some years been under the care of one of the older missionaries, but behaved so ill that all the missionaries thought he should be dismissed, except the one who had the care of him and to

whom he had caused the greatest uneasiness. Just this one was unwilling to consent to the boy's dismissal. One of the younger missionaries started up, and said: "But how is it that just you take the part of this unthankful fellow, you, whom he is treating worse than any one of us?" The old one slowly replied: "Brother, the day will come when you will find it the harder to give one up, the more trouble he has given you." Another example, better yet: If the Lord Jesus would punish us in proportion to the trouble we give Him, it would be dreadful. Let us try to be towards our fellow-creatures somewhat like what He is to us: when men had so grievously provoked Him, and were yet sinners, He died for us. So then let us not entertain resentment in ourselves, but be "tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us."

DILIGENCE AND ATTENTION.

THERE was a little boy named John Smeaton. He would often leave his play to watch men at their work. He would ask how one part was to be fitted to another, and how the thing was to be used when it was done. If money was given him to buy cakes or playthings, he chose rather to spend it on tools, and tried to do what he had seen done with them.

Once he was seen at the top of his father's barn, fixing something like a windmill. At another time he saw some men fixing a pump, and took great notice of all they did. They had a thick piece of wood with a hole bored through it; it was longer than they wanted, so they cut off a bit. The little boy asked if he might have the bit. It was given to him, and with it he made a little real pump, with which he could raise water. When John Smeaton became a man, he con-

trived many very clever and useful things. He found better ways than had been known before of making mills, to be turned by wind or water: and he built a tall light-house on the top of a rock in the sea, which serves as a lantern to shew sailors the way they should go, and warn them where there is danger. By this means many lives have been saved, and many people have had reason to be glad that John Smeaton was not a careless, idle boy.

Another boy, named Isaac Newton, lived at a farm, and was often set to mind the sheep and cattle, or to assist in driving them to market. But while he did what he was told to do in this way, he tried also to get learning, and was much pleased when he was sent to school. He amused himself by making a windmill and a wooden clock; and was once found in a hay-loft, trying to do a very hard sum. *Once* he saw an apple fall from a tree in

the garden. Many boys would only have picked it up and eaten it. But Isaac Newton was set thinking how and why it was that when the stalk broke the apple fell to the ground. Did *you* ever think why this is? If you wish to know, ask your papa or mamma to explain it to you; it is well worth knowing. By thinking about this common thing, Isaac Newton was led to find out more than was ever known before about how the sun, and moon, and stars, and earth, keep their right places, and move about in such beautiful order. This led him to admire and adore the wisdom and goodness of God, who rules the whole. As you grow older, it will be very pleasant to you to learn what this great man found out, and the use of the knowledge he gained by minding what he saw.

One little boy, named Benjamin West, was set to mind a little baby in its cradle. He looked at it kindly and felt pleased

to see it smile in its sleep. He wished he could draw a picture of the baby; and, seeing a piece of paper on the table and a pen and ink, he tried what he could do. When his mother came in, he begged her not to be angry with him for touching the pen and ink and paper: and he shewed her the picture he had made. His mother knew at once what it was meant for. She was much pleased, and kissed her little boy. Then he said, if she liked it, he would make pictures of some flowers she held in her hand; and so he went on, trying to do better, till he became one of the finest painters in the world.

Any one, if he will try, may become useful, though he may not be able to become one of the most useful among men. Boys also might become useful much sooner than they are apt to do, if they would only watch the opportunity when there is something to be done to which *they are* equal. Some have lost their

parents before they were ten years old, and they were placed with people who looked to their work to pay for their board and clothing, and who have been very well satisfied with their bargain. If a boy can do so when he *must*, it would be a very noble thing if a boy *would*, before the trials of life compel him to it.

THE YOUTHFUL MARTYR.

THE following instance of one who felt he was not too young to die for the Saviour, is taken from the Church History of the pious Joseph Milner :—

" At Cæsarea, in Cappadocia, a child named Cyril shewed uncommon fortitude. He called on the name of Jesus Christ continually ; nor could threats or blows prevent him from openly avowing Christianity. Several children of the same age persecuted him, and his own

father, with the applauses of many persons for his zeal in the support of Paganism, drove him out of his house. The judge ordered him to be brought before him, and said:—

"'My child, I will pardon your faults, and your father shall receive you again; it is in your power to enjoy your father's estate, provided you are wise and take care of your own interest.'

"'I rejoice to bear your reproaches,' replied the child; 'God will receive me. I am not sorry I am expelled out of our house, I shall have a better mansion. I fear not death, because it will introduce me into a better life.'

"Divine grace having enabled him to witness this good confession, he was ordered to be bound and led, as it were, to execution. The judge had given secret orders to bring him back again, hoping that the sight of the fire might overcome *his* resolution. Cyril remained inflexi-

ble. The humanity of the judge still induced him to continue his remonstrances.

"'Your fire and sword,' says the young martyr, 'are insignificant. I go to a better home—I go to more excellent riches. Despatch me presently, that I may enjoy them.'

"The spectators wept through compassion.

"'Ye should rather rejoice,' says he, 'in conducting me to punishment. Ye know not what a city I am going to inhabit, nor what is my hope.'

"Thus he went to his death, and was the admiration of the whole city. Such an example illustrates well that Scripture, 'Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings Thou hast ordained strength.'"

A spirit such as this young martyr breathed we would gladly see sought out and cherished by all the children of our Sabbath-schools. What can be more de-

sirable than that they should be decidedly for Christ? Generally their parents, instead of being offended, would greatly rejoice, and they would also secure a larger degree of earthly prosperity. Suppose it, however, to be the reverse, that even their parents should turn them out of their homes, and that they would have to go and be burnt up at the stake; all of these sufferings would have been of no moment in comparison with the heavenly joys to which they would be introduced. And what child would not rather burn an hour than burn for ever? Cyril, whose history we have just cited, was truly wise; young as he was, he knew how to count the cost, and that time might not at all be weighed against eternity. Children are struck with the bravery of great generals—of a Cæsar, a Buonaparte; in the young Cyril they may, nevertheless, see a heroism casting all the fame of the *great* and mighty of the world in the

shade. Death, amid the deepest disgrace in the estimation of mankind—death in the horrid form of consuming fire, could not intimidate or move the youthful Christian. Such children have no cause for fear; either they will not feel what they are called to suffer, or they will be more than supported—as soon as released, all will be over. There can be no martyrdom, no pain in heaven. All men would gladly be Christians in eternity. If the judge who condemned Cyril never repented, what would he not now give if he had only proved as brave? He who fears to sin is alone truly brave.

WILBERFORCE RICHMOND IN HIS DYING CHAMBER.

He gradually awoke, and I observed him to fix his eyes on a globe of water which stood near the window, and con-

tained a gold fish. I inquired what he was looking at so earnestly. He replied, "I have often watched the mechanical motion of our gold and silver fish in that globe. There is now only one left, and that seems to be weak and sickly. I wonder which of us will live the longest, the fish or I?" He paused, and then added, "That fish, my dear papa, is supported by the water in the vessel, but I hope I am supported by the waters of salvation. The fish will soon die, and live no more; but if I am upheld by the water of salvation, I shall live for ever."

His remark led me to make some observations on the practical use which may be made of natural objects, and the advantages of cultivating a habit of seeing something of God and the soul everywhere, and of accustoming the mind to seek such comparisons and allusions as tend to improve and delight it. Wilber*force* observed, "This is the very prin-

ciple exemplified in our Lord's parables, and in all the figurative language of Scripture."

At this moment a gleam of light from the setting sun shone upon the gold fish, and produced a brilliant reflexion from its scales, as it swam in the glass vessel.

"Look," said he, "at its beauty now."

"So, my dear boy, may a bright and more glorious sun shine upon you, and gild the evening of your days."

"I hope," he replied, "although I sometimes feel a cloud and a doubt pass across my mind, 'that in the evening time there shall be light,' and then 'in His light I shall see light.'"

"THOU, GOD, SEEST ME!"

THERE was a man that used to go in the night to his neighbour's field to steal corn. What do you suppose he went in

the night for? Because he thought nobody would see him. Did he think right? Let us see.

One night he took his little son along with him to hold the bag while he put in the corn. The Bible says, "Train up a child in the way he should go." Was this man doing so with his little boy? But how do you think he felt when he got to the place where the corn was? He was afraid some one would see him, because he knew he was doing wrong. And what do you suppose he did? Before he began to pull the corn he looked this way and that way, to see if any person was looking at him.

"Father," said the little boy, "you forgot to look somewhere."

"Where—where?" asked the father.

"You forgot," answered the little boy, "to look up, to see whether God was looking at you."

The thought that God was looking at

him so frightened the man, that he ran away as fast as he could, without stealing the corn.

Children, whenever you are afraid somebody will see what you are doing, always remember first to look up; and if you are going to do any thing that you would not like to have God see, you had better run away as fast as you can, for God can see as well in the dark as in the light, and from His piercing eye you cannot hide yourself. Always remember these four words, "Thou, God, seest me!"

THE YOUNG DELIVERER.

The following touching incident is said to have occurred on board a steamboat which lately sank in one of the American rivers, causing a frightful destruction of life:—

"Among the passengers was a lad,

about fourteen years of age, named Casely, or Cassey, from Shelby, Kentucky. When the boat began to sink, his first movements were to drag a younger boy, who was asleep, from a state room, and carry him on the upper deck, when the cabin was fast filling with water. On the upper deck he saw two infants, which in the alarm and confusion had been left almost naked and without a protector. The young hero caught them up, stripped himself of almost all his clothing, which he wrapped around them, took one under each arm, and commenced breathing upon their faces, alternately from one to the other. He stayed upon the wreck with others of the passengers, until taken of by one of the boats from the city, with th infants still under his arms alive and wel and he still engaged in breathing on the faces. These children should be taug to lisp their deliverer's name 'amo *their* earliest words.'"

The closing sentiment we commend to Christian parents. That it is just and proper, no one will doubt. It is the prompting of natural gratitude; and should the parents of those children survive, they would be deemed below human if they did not employ every device that would serve to imprint upon the memory and affection of their children the name of their young deliverer.

Now we ask, what are the obligations of Christian parents? A great Deliverer has come to save their children from eternal death. Christian parents, will not you teach the name of Jesus to your children, among the first sounds that you utter in their ears?

A CHILD AND AN INFIDEL.

THE celebrated Hume was dining at the house of an intimate friend. After dinner

the ladies withdrew, and, in the course of conversation, Mr. Hume made some assertion, which caused a gentleman present to observe to him, "If you can advance such sentiments as those, you certainly are, what the world gives you credit for being, an infidel." A little girl whom the philosopher had often noticed, and with whom he had become a favourite, by bringing her little presents of toys and of sweetmeats, happened to be playing about the room unnoticed. She, however, listened to the conversation, and on hearing the above expression left the room, went to her mother, and asked her,

"Mamma, what is an infidel?"

"An infidel, my dear!" replied the mother; "why should you ask such a question? An infidel is so awful a character that I scarcely know how to answer you."

"Oh, do tell me, mamma," answered the *child;* "I must know what an infidel is."

Struck with her eagerness, her mother at length replied,

"An infidel is one who believes that there is no God, no heaven, no hell, no hereafter."

Some days afterwards, Hume again visited the house of his friend. On being introduced to the parlour, he found no one there but his favourite little girl; he went to her, and attempted to take her up in his arms and kiss her, as he had been used to do; but the child shrunk with horror from his touch.

"My dear," said he, "what is the matter; do I hurt you?"

"No," she replied, "you do not hurt me, but I cannot kiss you, I cannot play with you."

"Why not, my dear?"

"Because you are an infidel."

"An infidel! what is that?"

"One who believes there is no God, no heaven, no hell, no hereafter."

"And are you not sorry for me, my dear?" asked the philosopher.

"Yes, indeed, I am sorry," returned the child, with solemnity; "and I pray to God for you."

"Do you, indeed! and what do you say?"

"I say, O God, teach this man that Thou art."

A striking illustration of the words of sacred Scripture, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast ordained strength, because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger."

READING THE BIBLE.

"MAMMA, why do you read the Bible so often?" said little Mary to her mother: —"Haven't you read it all through?"

"Yes, a great many times, my dear."

"Well, then, you must know all that is

in it by this time, but yet you read it every day."

"Do you remember last summer, Mary, when you were away at Miss Brooke's school, you told me that when you got a letter from home you used to read it over and over again, until it was almost worn out?"

"And so I did, mamma."

"Well, what made you read the letter so often? you knew all that there was in it?"

"Why, because it seemed a pleasure, and made me think about home, and you, and dear papa."

"Well, my dear, I read over some parts of the Bible that I have many times read before, for the same reason that made you like to read your letters. It reminds me of my home in heaven, of my heavenly Father, and my dear Saviour; and therefore I love to read it."

"Is heaven my home, too, mamma?"

said little Mary; "and will you take me with you when you go there?"

"I cannot tell you, my dear; I cannot give you leave to go to heaven, but I know who can."

"You mean Jesus Christ, mamma?"

"Yes, my love, you must ask Him; and you must read and learn to understand this book, which is like a letter from Him to us, to tell us about Himself and about heaven. When you do, I pray God you may love the Bible as much as I do."

TRUSTING FAITH.

A MINISTER of the Gospel was one day speaking of that active, living faith, which should at all times cheer the heart of the sincere follower of Jesus, and related a beautiful illustration, that had just oc*curred* in his own family.

He had gone into a cellar which in winter was quite dark, and entered by a trap-door. A little daughter, only three years old, was trying to find him, and came to the trap-door, but on looking down, all was *dark, dark,* and she called,—

"Are you down in the cellar, papa?"

"Yes; would you like to come, Mary?"

"It is dark. I *can't* come, papa."

"Well, my daughter, I am right below you, and I can see you, though you cannot see me, and if you will drop yourself, I will catch you."

"Oh! I should fall; I can't see you, papa."

"I know it," he answered; "but I am really here, and you shall not fall, or hurt yourself. If you will jump, I will catch you safely."

Little Mary strained her eyes to the utmost, but she could catch no glimpse of her father. She hesitated, then advanced a little farther, then, summoning all her

resolution, she threw herself forward, and was received safely in her father's arms.

A few days after, she again discovered the cellar door open, and supposing her father there, she called, "Shall I come again, papa?"

"Yes, my dear, in a minute," he replied, and had just time to reach his arms towards her, when, in her childish glee, she fell shouting into his arms, and clasping his neck, said: "I knew, dear papa, I should not fall."

And now, dear children, the Lord Jesus is calling you to come to Himself. Many of you, I trust, have already obeyed His call, and chosen Him as your portion, but He is still saying, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not," and, "they that seek me early shall find me." Though, like little Mary, you cannot *see* Him visibly present, yet He assures you He is willing and waiting to receive *you, and* you have only to drop yourselves

into the arms of His sovereign mercy, and He will as surely receive you now, as when, while on earth, He "took little children in His arms, laid His hands on them, and blessed them."

DEATH OF A YOUTH.

A SHORT time since died, at the early age of sixteen, Lambert Bennett, the son of a settler, very unexpectedly to all his friends, and under circumstances deeply affecting, but attended with sweet consolation to those who mourned his departure from the midst of them. He was not a youth of robust constitution, being generally affected with shortness of breath, which, however, did not prevent him from engaging in numerous services to lighten the cares of his parents and

help in bearing their burdens. He used his opportunities of instruction at school with great zeal and success as regards reading, of which he was exceedingly fond; from the active and exciting play of his companions he was often known to keep away, preferring to read all the religious tracts of which he could obtain a supply. That he was not destitute of abilities, was singularly manifested by the readiness with which he made himself acquainted with the written letters, before even he himself had learned to write. He read manuscript correctly, at a time when he did not know yet how to form the letters.

On the other hand, his mind seemed to refuse having to do with the knowledge of figures, so that he made scarcely any progress in ciphering—the art which seems so needful for prosperity in temporal affairs, but which he seemed not to perceive *the* use of, just as if he felt he was

not for life, but for an early dismissal from its snares and dangers.

Not long before his death, seeing his mother engaged in making a jacket for him, he said that he did not think he would wear that article. His mother said, perhaps he would prefer a coat. To which he replied, "No, mamma, it is not that; but I think I shall not want it at all." A new pair of boots being brought home for him, he said, they would do for his brother, as he did not think he would have any need of them. He was in his ordinary state of health at that time, and so continued all Wednesday the 11th, on which day, after taking his supper as usual, he asked for the tracts which the Rev. Mr. Anderson had left there, and offered to sit down and read to his mother. She said he had read all of them before, but he replied: "Oh, I like to read them over again." He did so accordingly, and it is remembered that the Tract Society's

publication, *The Brazen Serpent*, was one of those he read on that, the last evening he spent on the earth. The family retired as usual, and enjoyed their rest till between two and three in the morning of the 12th, when his mother was awoke by a fall in the adjoining room; she roused her husband and asked him to look what had happened: he found the youth lying on the floor in a state of insensibility. By the remedies which were applied, he came to himself for a short time, but it was almost only to give signs of agony of pain which he was suffering. His father took the opportunity of asking, did he recollect any of the pretty hymns he had been in the habit of learning: to which he replied with readiness, "Yes, he remembered them well." Soon after, his soul left its tenement of clay.

Will our young readers endeavour to spend their hours on earth so that, if they *should* be unexpectedly called from it,

there may be some soothing evidence that they have chosen the things which make for their everlasting peace? Fix, young reader, your affections on Him whom we are taught to see in the brazen serpent—Him who was lifted up on the cross, and has, we will hope, drawn the youth, whose death we are here recording, to Himself in glory!—(John xii. 32.)

GOD'S MERCY TO THE UNMERCIFUL.

THE following remarkable story is related as a matter of fact. Two boys—thoughtlessly and foolishly indeed—went to take a jack-daw's nest from a hole under the belfry window, in the tower of a church. But two things were absolutely impossible: one was, to reach it standing within the building, the other to climb to it from without. What was then to be

done? They put a plank through the window, as glaziers sometimes do, and while the heavier boy was to sit on one end within the building, and thus to steady it, the other was to go to the opposite end, and from thence to take the wished-for nest. This he succeeded in doing; and immediately he told his companion it contained five young birds, all fledged, when the other answered:

"Then I'll have three."

"No," said the younger, "I run all the danger, and I'll have the three."

"You sha'n't," said his comrade.—"Promise me three, or I'll drop you."

"Do, if you like; but you shall have only two," was the fearless reply; when up went the plank, and down he fell, upwards of a hundred feet, to the ground! And now the imagination of the reader pictures him stretched out as dead, or at least with limbs all mangled and broken; *but this* was not the case. At the moment

of his fall he was holding the birds by their legs; in one hand he had three, and in the other two; and as they felt they were falling, they naturally fluttered their pinions. The boy, too, wore, at the time, a carter's frock, tied round the neck; which, filling up with air from beneath, buoyed him up, and he descended easily to the ground. This he had no sooner reached, than, thinking of the unjust demand of his companion, he looked up and exclaimed, "Now you shall have none!" and ran away, without the slightest injury, to the astonishment of the passers-by, who, with indescribable feelings, had witnessed his most extraordinary descent.

So marvellous a deliverance from imminent peril through the gracious interposition of Providence, may well caution the young reader against a thoughtless choice of associates. The act of the boy within the church was as murderous, in the sight

of God, as if he had shot or stabbed his companion. "Enter not into the path of the wicked," says Solomon, "and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away. He that walketh with wise men shall be wise; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed."

DYING WORDS OF A CHILD.

THERE was a little girl, about nine years old, who had been brought up from the age of three or four years learning the Bible, and nothing else, as an instrument of religious instruction. She awoke one night at midnight, and called to her father who was sleeping in an adjoining bed, "Father, will you get up and read to me?" He arose and said: "What shall I read, *my dear*?" "Oh, read me the 10th chapter

of St. John, that sweet chapter that tells about Jesus being a shepherd and loving His sheep." He read it to her. She then said: "My father, will you pray for me?" He knelt down and prayed for her. He thought there was some impression upon her mind, but hardly knew what it was. He had scarcely lain down to rest again, before the same sweet voice cried: "Father, won't you get up and read for me again?" "What shall I read you, my dear?" "Oh, read me the 26th and 27th chapters of Matthew." "Why shall I read them, my child?" asked the father. "Oh, because they tell me of the sufferings of my dear Saviour; I want to hear about them." When he had read them, she said: "My father, will you pray for me again?" The father then began to be afraid lest she should be resting upon him, rather than on the arm of Christ, and said: "My child, I am afraid you are trusting to your father to be your

Saviour." "Oh, father, how can I? is it not written 'All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. The chastisement of our peace was upon *Him*, and with *His* stripes we were healed.'" That was the last sound the little girl uttered. She was immediately seized with croup, and in a few hours her spirit was in another world.

THE DYING CHILD'S REQUEST.

"MAMMA!" a little maiden said,
Almost with her expiring sigh,
"Put no sweet roses round my head
When in my coffin-dress I lie."

"Why not, my dear?" the mother cried;
"What flower so well a corpse adorns?"
"Mamma!" the little one replied,
"They crown'd our Saviour's head with thorns."

CHRISTMAS HYMN.

Little children, can you say
Why you're glad on Christmas-day?
Little children, can you tell
Why you hear the sweet church-bell?
Can you tell me who was born
Early on the Christmas-morn?

'Tis the birthday of our king;
We our little offerings bring—
'Tis our pleasant holyday,
Therefore we are come to pray,
Sing, and praise, and hear His Word,
Keep the birthday of our Lord.

Children—think before you speak—
When you come your Lord to seek,
Have you any gold to throw
At His feet who loved you so?
Have you frankincense and myrrh?—
Sweetest spice, you know they were.

Children, you have nought, you say,
At your Saviour's feet to lay;
Ask Him, then, your souls to take,
And to save for His name's sake.
Jesus, Saviour, take each heart,
Make it holy as Thou art.

THE FORCE OF PATIENT ENDURANCE.

SARAH was a feeble-looking girl, but she loved her Sunday-school, and, what is better still, she loved her Saviour. She had a sad, careless mother, who "made no account of so much religion." One Sunday morning at breakfast time, the mother said to Sarah, "Sarah, run to the shop and fetch us a loaf for breakfast."

"Why, mother," said the girl, "it's Sunday."

"And what if it is?" the mother replied; "dost think we must have no breakfast because it's Sunday?"

Poor Sarah was going to observe that the loaf might have been got on Saturday night, and as it was unfortunately forgotten, it would be better to be without bread than break the Sabbath. Her mother, however, perceived that she was *going* to "preach a sermon," as she

called it, and stopped all further inquiries on the subject of the loaf by hitting the girl some heavy blows on the back, and then going to fetch the loaf herself. Sarah wept not so much about the blows —she was grieved to see how careless her mother was, and her grief was by no means diminished when her mother returned, and said she should have no breakfast because she would not fetch the loaf. Sarah said nothing, but quietly went off to school.

This was only the beginning of Sarah's troubles, for, on her return home to dinner, she had hardly entered the house when her mother declared she was a little canting Methodist, and she should have no dinner for not fetching the loaf in the morning. Now what would some of our young friends have done under such circumstances? "Why, I should have gone to my granny's," says one, "and have asked for some dinner there." "That's

too far off for me," says another; "I'd have gone to some o' the neighbours, and I'd have got a bit of dinner somewhere." Well, but Sarah did neither. Had she gone either to relative or neighbour it would have been sure to have created a stir somewhere; and Sarah knew what the consequence would have been if her mother had engaged in a stir, both as it respects her parent and herself. I'll tell you what she did. There was a little room up stairs where she slept, and just then all was quiet in that little room. There she went. She untied her bonnet, and dropped on her knees by the bed-side. "Oh, my dear Saviour," she said, "help a poor, feeble girl to bear up under this. I'm hungry and I'm weak, and I'm almost broken-hearted; but Thou hast meat that my mother knows nothing of; come and feed my soul, and give me strength." And so she went on, as well *as her sobs* and weakness would let her;

and she prayed for her mother, that God would teach her heart. And when she got up from her knees, though she had an empty stomach, she had a light heart; and she tied her bonnet, and crept quietly down stairs, and off to school. Her mother eyed her as she passed, and she saw a calmness in her white face, and a resignation in her eyes, red with weeping, that went to her very soul. Her teacher at the school saw that there was something to do with Sarah, but she could not get out of her what it was; and though the scholars were still more curious to know, Sarah would not tell them. Poor girl! how many of them would have given her the last bit of bread they had in the world if they had known; for Sunday-school girls have hearts full of feeling for each other in sorrow. But she sat in her class, and looked at her teacher with her pale face, and listened to all she said. Sally was as ready as

any to answer questions; and as subjects of interest were spoken of one by one, she almost forgot her mother's cruelty and her own hunger. But as she was walking home, she was almost ready to drop with feebleness, and when she entered at the doorway, and her mother saw her, a parent's feelings prevailed. She was fairly subdued by her daughter's quiet, patient submission.

"Sarah, my girl," said the mother, "how sorry I am that I've kept thee starving all day—here's thy supper;" and then she asked her if she had had any thing to eat, and whether she had told any one about it. You may imagine the effect this would have upon the family. Sally got the victory here, not by resistance, but by suffering; and she was never asked again to go and fetch a loaf on Sunday.

Now Sarah had the love of Christ in *her heart*; this constrained her to suffer

—willingly to suffer. It was the same principle that sustained the apostles, the martyrs, so that every one could say—

"When I am weak, then am I strong,
Grace is my shield, and Christ my song."

CANDIDATES FOR CONFIRMATION.

DANIEL was a wild and careless lad, whose mind had never been troubled hitherto with the least thought of religion.

The world was every thing with him, all his care, all his employ, all his delight. Eternity, with its important stake, he wholly disregarded. Confirmation, in his view, was a thing of course. Several of his family had gone to the last confirmation, and he was old enough for the present, and he thought that if he could repeat his catechism, that was enough, I endeavoured to impress serious conviction upon his conscience, but could only obtain a promise that he would turn the matter over in his mind. Some slight impressions, however, were made by repeated conversations. As the time drew near, I endeavoured to bring his mind to a point. He told me that he was willing to be confirmed. To which I replied, I am glad to hear it, if it be really true that you wish to confirm your baptismal vow, and really to renounce Satan, the world, and the flesh. But I must make *you* understand the meaning and serious-

ness of the determination you have just spoken of. Confirmation is a promise you are going to make, or, rather, to renew, to God. You are going to promise great things—things which, if you perform, will make the world wonder. You are going to promise the great, holy, heart-searching God, that you will, from this time forth, for ever renounce, forsake, and abhor, the devil and all his works, sin of every kind, of every degree, whatever your conscience tells you to be wrong, and that you will resist with all your might whatever temptations have hitherto overcome you. These are great things for you to promise."

"I doubt," said he, "I am not fit—I had rather not go."

Not at present taking any notice of his hesitation, I proceeded: "You are in the world from morning to night, Satan puts every temptation in your way,—sin, the neglect of God, the neglect of His

Word, and prayer; your companions draw you as far as they can from every serious thought about your soul, your Saviour, or eternity. Now you are going to promise, that when you meet them to-morrow, you will strive against them as far as you can, and if they will not hear you, that you will turn away from them. This is a part of the meaning of confirmation. Is this your meaning?"

"I think I had better not go," said he.

"I do not wholly discourage you from going. If you can go without telling a falsehood, it will be a blessing to you. But to profess and promise to God, in His own house, what you do not mean to perform, would be the most wicked falsehood you could utter. Did you know that it meant all this?"

"Nothing near so much."

"Now," said I, "I do not wish to frighten you, but it is so dreadful to go *blind*folded and not think what you are

about, before you promise. In your business you never make promises in this thoughtless way, and this is by far the most serious business you ever took in hand."

"Yes, indeed, I begin to see it is, and I think I had better give it up."

"I do not advise you to give it up to-night; you have not yet asked God to teach you. He is waiting for the first turn of your heart to Him, if you will but seek Him. Let me shew you in the parable of the prodigal a picture of God's love and readiness to welcome you."

He listened with great attention, and at length said, "I should like to go, but I think I had better not if I am not fit."

"I think so too. Only remember, that unfitness for confirmation is unfitness for death. And how awful to be called into eternity in this state of unfitness! How awful to be growing more unfit every day by neglecting these

things! Do not despise this precious gift! It is worth all that you have in the world—the pearl of great price, worth ten thousand worlds, if you had them to buy it."

"Yes, but it is such a very strict thing."

"And you must expect to find it so. You never can be religious without a hard struggle. Could you bear what the world will say?—to have all your old companions joining the laugh against you?"

He gave me no answer, and I continued,—"Do let me tell you how much happier a thing it is to serve God than t run after the world; at least, let me pe suade you to make the trial. God h more to give you than the world, and you will but ask Him, 'He giveth lib ally and upbraideth not.' Now, h you really ever asked Him?"

"I think I have prayed lately; b *doubt*, not with all my heart."

I continued my instructions at some length. His conscience was clearly convinced for the time, but he could not make up his mind to the cost. The chains of sin and Satan were too strong to be broken by such faint and fruitless convictions.

Elizabeth was a child in the Sunday-school, evidently under the power of divine grace at the period of confirmation. Happily for herself, she was not gifted with fluency of utterance; but the little that was brought out by questioning her patiently, appeared to be in truth the language of the heart.

"How do you feel about being confirmed now the time is come?"

"Certainly, not by a great deal as I could wish."

"I suppose you feel it a great thing to do? Would you wish *not* to be confirmed?"

"No, I wish to serve God."

"And what good do you expect it will do you?"

"None at all, except I go with a true heart."

"What does confirmation mean?"

"The giving up of the heart to God."

"But were you not given up to God soon after you were born?"

"Yes, when I was baptised."

"Then why do you want to be confirmed?"

"*To give up myself to God.*"

"It will cost you a great deal—there is so much to be given up first. Would you give your heart wholly to God?"

"I will try."

"Is there nothing in the world that you love so well as God?"

"I do not think there is."

"But do you think that you can ever perform these great things that you are going to promise?"

"Not without God's help."

"But to whom does God give His help?"

"To them that ask Him."

"But what hope have you of God's help?"

"Because He has promised."

"And what made God promise it to you?"

"Because Jesus Christ died for sinners."

"Now you are going to promise to renounce all that the devil, the world, and your own wicked heart tempts you to follow rather than the Word of God; which of these three do you find to be the hardest?"

"I think I find my heart the greatest trouble."

"And how do you expect to overcome it?"

"By faith—by believing in Jesus Christ so as to love Him."

"What are the articles of Christian faith?"

"All that the Bible tells me of Jesus Christ."

"And do you really believe all that you read about Him?"

"I hope I do, but not enough."

"Do you believe in Him so as to try to seek Him?"

"I hope I do, but not enough; I wish I did."

"What do you think of God's commandments?—do you think you can keep them?"

"By God's grace, I will try; I find them very comfortable."

There was not much enlargement of mind, but enough to shew the guidance of the Spirit of truth. Monosyllables, however, which often shew no more than a cold and unmeaning assent, in her case displayed at once the timidity of her cha*racter* and the sincerity of her profession.

THE TULIPS.

Lucy was very fond of fine colours. She used to admire a bed of tulips in her father's garden, and declared very positively they were the most beautiful flowers that could be seen; for, I am sorry to say, Lucy was rather a giddy girl, and apt to run from one thing to another, without giving proper attention to any. After some time the tulips went out of bloom, and Lucy did not think any more about them.

One day, in the month of October, she saw her father very busy at the place where the tulips grew; she ran up to him, and found he was planting some roots which looked like onions. Without asking any questions, she cried out, "Oh, *father, what* are you going to do? Why

do you spoil the pretty tulip-bed, and put a parcel of onions instead, only fit to make broth or to be sent to the market to sell? I am sure the tulips are much better."

Her father was going to explain what he was doing, but Lucy ran on so fast, and was so loud in her complaints that she was very sure the tulip-bed would be spoiled, that her father thought he would let her find out the folly of her conceit. So he sent her away on an errand, and said nothing more to her at that time.

The winter came and passed away, and spring returned at last; but poor Lucy had not forgotten the tulip-bed, and she determined not to go and look at the onions, for she was sure her father had spoiled the garden. He guessed the reason, but took no notice of it, till one day he led her to that part of the garden, and, to her great surprise, she saw the tulips all in full bloom.

"Oh, father," she cried out, "how glad *I am* you took away the nasty onions!"

"I did not take them away," said her father; "these flowers came from what you were so sure were onions."

Lucy went on just as foolishly as before, and contradicted her father, till he took one up and shewed her the root. She then felt ashamed, begged his pardon, and promised to try not to be foolish again, but to remember that he knew best.

I hope my little readers are not like Lucy. Are you "wise in your own conceit?" King Solomon said (Prov. xxvi. 16), "The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason." I have always found that conceited persons are the most ignorant, and that they are too idle and careless to learn, so they never become so wise as they might have been, unless they subdue this conceit. "Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil." (Prov. iii. 7.)

THE INFIDEL CONVERTED.

It happened that a certain man who did not believe in the Lord Jesus, nor read the Bible, in travelling lost his way. It was very hot weather, and being very thirsty, he called at a cottage for some water. There was a little girl sitting at the door, and he said, "My child, do you think your mother would give me a mug of water?"

"Oh, yes, by all means," she replied, "if you will step in, sir."

But the employment of the child arrested his attention. She was busily engaged with her book.

"What are you reading, my dear?" he said.

"My Bible, sir."

"Your Bible, child! Oh, I suppose you are getting off your task for school."

"No, sir, I am not."

"Why, then, are you reading your Bible?"

"Because, sir, I love it."

The man was struck. "The child reads her Bible because she loves it! Why, I never read it with such a feeling in my life!"

He could not get rid of his feelings. The arrow of conviction was driven by the Spirit of God in a sure place. He began to read his Bible, not as at other times, to scoff and ridicule, but to learn. And he began to pray with the feelings of a man who had discovered his spiritual need; and, through grace, such a change was effected, that he became as active in spreading and recommending the Gospel of Christ to his fellow-sinners, as before he was in vilifying it and blaspheming.

THE SQUIRREL.

The pretty red squirrel lives up in a tree,
A little blithe creature as ever can be;
He dwells in the boughs where the stock-dove
broods,
Far in the shades of the green summer woods;
His food is the young juicy cone of the pine,
And the milky beechnut is his bread and his wine.

In the joy of his nature he frisks with a bound
To the topmost twigs, and then down to the ground;
Then up again, like a wingèd thing,
And from tree to tree with a vaulting spring;
Then he sits up aloft, and looks waggish and queer,
As if he would say, "Ay, follow me here!"
And then he grows pettish, and stamps with his
foot;
And then independently cracks his nut;
And thus he lives the long summer through,
Without a care or a thought of sorrow.

But small as he is, he knows he may want,
In the bleak winter weather, when food is scant;
So he finds a hole in an old tree's core,
And there makes his nest and lays up his store;
And when cold winter comes and the trees are bare,
When the white snow is falling and keen is the air,

He heeds it not as he sits by himself,
In his warm little nest, with his nuts on his shelf.
O, wise little squirrel! no wonder that he
In the green summer woods is as blithe as can be!

And what should little Christian children learn from this pretty poem of Mary Howitt, on the gambols and industry of the little red squirrel? While young they must not lose all their days in idleness and play, but remember that they have much knowledge to gain, and but little time to acquire it in. We must all "work while it is called to-day, the night cometh in which no man worketh."

THE TWO HOUSES.

(*See Frontispiece.*)

I ONCE knew a rich man who determined to have a very large and beautiful house built for himself. He bought a lot of ground in a beautiful part of the city, and took great pains to have the house

built in the best manner. There were many spacious rooms and wide halls. It was planned so as to be warm in winter and cool in summer. No expense was spared to have it as comfortable and complete a dwelling as could be made. No doubt he looked forward to many years of enjoyment in his new and elegant house.

At the same time that this large house was preparing for himself and his family, he had another built for them. And there was a great difference between the two. For the second house had but one small room for the whole family, and that room was mostly under-ground. It had, indeed, strong walls and was built of marble, but it had no windows and but one small door, and that was made of iron. What a contrast there was between the wide and lofty mansion, so bright and handsome, and the low building under the willow-tree, which one would scarcely

notice! Yet these two houses were built for the same people. The one was for the *living* family; the other for the *dead*. For the low house under the tree is the vault into which their bodies are to be placed, as one after another shall be called away from life.

The vault was soon finished, and it was ready long before the large house. And into which of them do you think the rich owner himself went first to take up his abode? Strange as it may seem, he was ready for the vault before the fine dwelling was ready for *him;* and many months before the spacious rooms of the new house were fit to be inhabited, its builder was laid in the narrow, dark, and cold apartment, which he will not leave until the earth shall give up its dead at the last day.

This is a fact which ought to fix the attention of the young. To you every thing in life seems bright and happy, and promising great enjoyment, and you

forget its end, or imagine it is too far off to be thought of. *The house of the living* is so large and beautiful, that it hides from our sight *the house of the dead.* But remember, that like the man I have been telling you of you may have to lie down in the silent grave before you have entered upon the pleasures of life which you are expecting. If you will be wise, you will live and act in such a manner as to be prepared both for life and death: to enjoy the one, and not to fear the other. The Saviour has declared: "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." This is true in the most important sense possible. The true believer, whose sins are pardoned, and who is accepted in Christ, has the promise of a house which is not made with hands, but is eternal: not in this perishing world, but in the heavens. And the passage from this life to that is not to *die* as the world speaks of death: it is to fall asleep on earth, and awake with God.

"THE WELL IS DEEP."

CAN any of my young readers think of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, being weary, and for refreshment resting upon Jacob's Well, and asking for a draught of water to quench His thirst? Yet so it was, for Jesus was the son of man, and as man He was a partaker of all our sufferings and infirmities. But Jesus took advantage of the conversation with the woman of Samaria to lead her mind from the water of Jacob's well to

that fountain of life from which whoever drinks will never thirst again. In that most interesting book, the "Narrative of a Mission to the Jews from the Church of Scotland," it is stated that Mr. Bonar engaged a very affable Jew to shew him the road to Jacob's well, who, after leading him through the town, gave him in charge to another that knew the place. They went out at the Eastern Gate, and proceeded along the Vale of Sychar, keeping near the base of Gerizzim for nearly two miles, till they arrived at a covered well, which is marked out by tradition as the memorable spot. It is immediately below the rocky path by which we had travelled the day before, at that point of the road where we turned from the spacious plain into the narrow vale between Ebal and Gerizzim. The guide removed a large stone that covers the mouth of the low vault built over the well, and then thrusting himself

through the narrow aperture, invited Mr. Bonar to follow. This he accordingly did, and, in the act of descending, his Bible escaping from his breast-pocket fell into the well, and was soon heard plunging into the water far below. The guide made very significant signs that it could not be recovered, for "the well is deep."

He who "leads the blind by a way which they know not," drew the woman that day by the invisible cords of grace, past all other fountains, to the well where she was to meet with one who told her "all that ever she did"—the Saviour of the world, and the Saviour of her soul. Nothing can equal the simple words of the Evangelist: "Jesus therefore being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well."

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